

BOOK 1

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Tompkins County Center of Government NYSHPO Report **SITE/BUILDING ANALYSIS & PROJECT SUMMARY**

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INTRODUCTION

Why is the facility needed - The Tompkins County government currently faces a significant space shortage, with a need for over 48,000 departmental gross square feet of office space. In response, the county is launching a project to consolidate its county employees onto a single campus. This consolidation will enable the county to deliver services that are more convenient, accessible, and better coordinated for its residents. At the same time, it will create a standardized and improved work environment for employees and help reduce long-term operating costs by ending leased space agreements and enhancing the energy performance of the building systems.

The project site is located at the corner of N Tioga and E Buffalo Streets in the DeWitt Park Historic District, in Ithaca, NY, which is centered around DeWitt Park and its historic buildings - a number of which are owned by the County. The buildings on this block are primarily larger-scaled civic structures, with numerous residential and some civic scaled buildings which surround the block (see historic district map shown below).

The site was selected for several reasons. First, the Historic Courthouse, the Old Jail, and the Daniel D. Tompkins Building/Old Courthouse already house a significant number of county employees who would not need to be relocated. Locating the new building on this site minimizes the size and cost of the new structure. Second, the location is convenient and accessible for County residents - whether walking or biking - and is situated next to a public transportation hub. Finally, placing the Center of Government building on this site and consolidating County employees within this block will enhance the social and financial vitality of the existing historic district. Sensitive revitalization of this central civic area, which includes some of the city's most prominent historic buildings, is an important County goal aimed at bolstering downtown vitality.

Currently, 461 employees work in downtown Ithaca. Relocating the 171 employees who would be moved to the new facility to a location outside of downtown would have a significant negative impact on the economic vitality and historic district of downtown Ithaca. If the County were to relocate all of its operations out of downtown to consolidate into a single facility, the effects would be even more detrimental.

Methodology

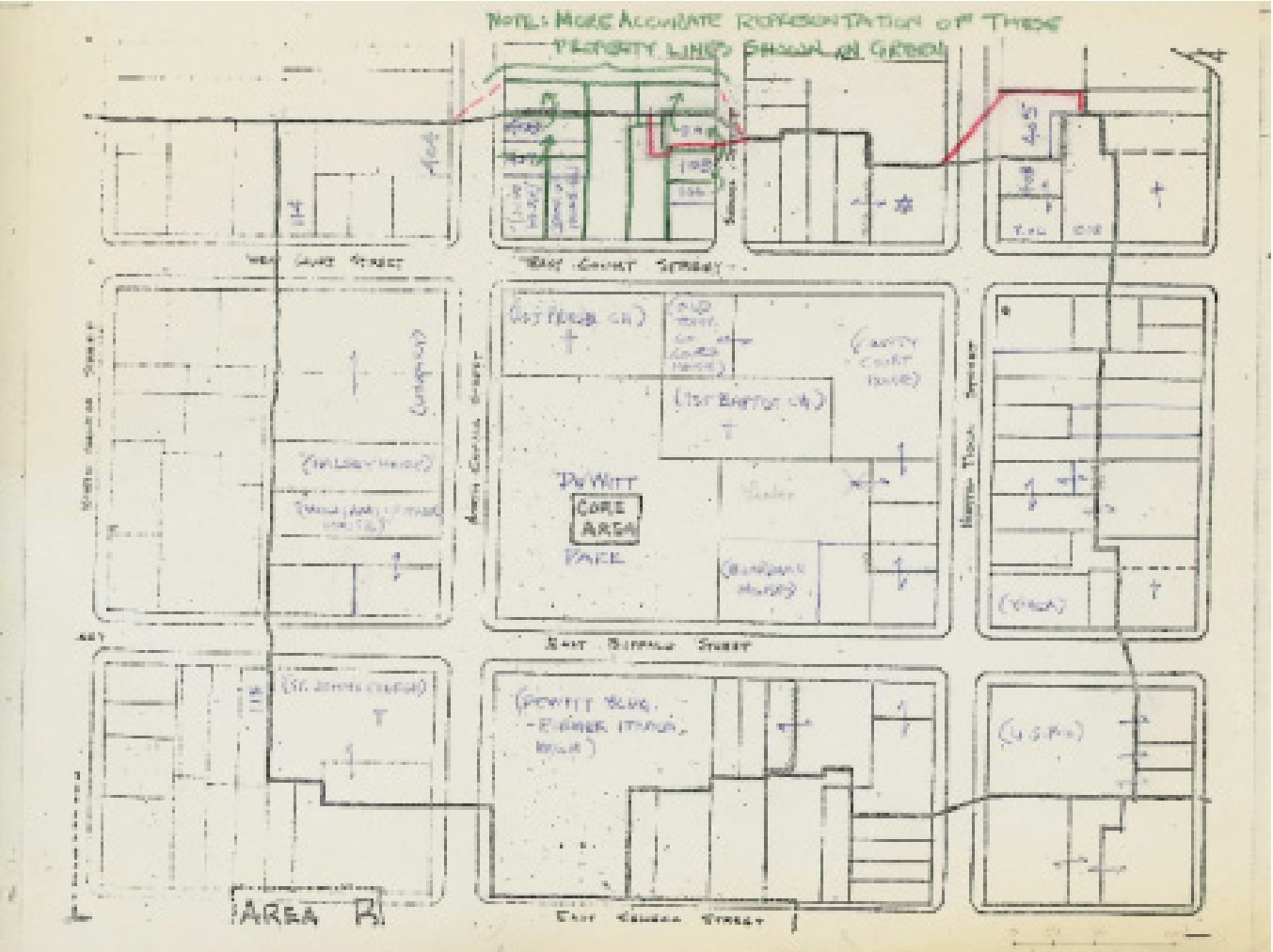
Over the course of several years, the County worked closely with HOLT Architects to develop an understanding of the required square footage for space needed, which resulted in the projected 48,000 departmental gross square footage.

The County looked at various sites adjacent to their existing historic buildings in the DeWitt Park Historic District over a considerable period of time, and this site at the corner of N Tioga and E Buffalo Streets was the only site that provided adequate space for constructing a facility close in proximity to their current buildings that also meets their projected space needs.

Five concepts were developed that explored different design solutions involving how to utilize the site and options for the three existing historic buildings that exist there.

Nine public service goals/considerations were established by the county as a framework for evaluating the overall success of the project. Based on these nine considerations, the design team established nineteen measurable goals that were used to compare and evaluate the success of each of the five concepts (see page 24-27).

Please see Appendix A, "Tompkins County Downtown Facilities: A Plan for Addressing Office Space Needs v.3," for the complete report which lays out the results of the County's exploration and Appendix D, Space Programming Needs.



The DeWitt Park National Register Historic District (1971). The three blue rectangles represent the three historic buildings added to the Register in the 1990's, which are the three buildings that occupy part of the space where the Tompkins County Center of Government is proposed to be located.

Public Service Goals/Considerations

To provide a clear understanding of the needs and goals of the Center of Government project, nine primary goals were developed and are summarized below:

1 - Meets current and projected office space requirements in compliance with County Guidelines

Will the proposed concept meet the space needs of departments in compliance with the office space guidelines adopted by the County Legislature in line with peer entities, and will it provide for the efficient and equitable allocation of space for staff?

In addition, does the concept option provide additional community space and meeting rooms? Does the concept option address the need to follow the directives from the NYS Court System to provide additional space in the Courthouse, relocating existing departmental space from the Courthouse to the new facility?

Does the new building have the flexibility to be able to accommodate the needs of the County in the century to come?

2 - Centralizes services for residents and employees in County-owned campus

Will the alternative centralize numerous services for the public in a single government campus?

3 - Minimizes tax burden on County residents

Fiscal considerations are an important consideration for the County's decisions. Will the chosen alternative result in a financially sound decision without placing an undue hardship on the County's taxpayers? Considering the challenging opportunity for grant funding that is most decidedly going to impact the financial viability of the project, finances have to be a primary consideration.

The County must hold itself accountable to providing good stewardship of public funds since their fiscal responsibility ties into the County's values, its Strategic Operations Plan, and into the overarching theme of fiscal responsibility in the Comprehensive Plan.

Also, will the alternative eliminate the need for the County to lease office space, which will reduce the County's expenses?

4 - Maintains and enhances downtown economic vitality

It is important for Ithaca's continued financial stability to maintain and invest in the downtown economic vitality that is represented by the presence of County employees, departments and buildings in Ithaca's downtown. 461 people are employed by the county in downtown Ithaca (171 of those would be located in the new Center for Government) and if part or all of these employees were to leave downtown Ithaca, it would represent a tremendous loss of revenue from those people spending money in the downtown on a daily basis; historic building maintenance; and general vitality from the presence of those employees. Does the proposed solution support Ithaca's downtown economic vitality?

5 - Meets parking needs and requirements

Will the alternative provide adequate parking for both staff and the public? It is necessary for parking to be available on site for the public to access the building (a long-standing concern) as well as providing a limited number of spaces available to employees who come and go throughout the day and for first responder vehicles.

6 - Provides County residents equitable access to services that are within walking and biking distance which is also serviced by frequent bus routes

Will the option provide residents access to offices within the County's largest population center and will it provide equitable access to those services? Does the location allow the public to access County services via public transportation? Is the location walkable? Is it accessible by bicycle?

7 - Meets County's Green Building Policy and NYS Energy Code Requirements

Does the concept address the County's sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions goals and comply with the County's Green Building Policy? The County has advocated that the new Center of Government meet LEED Gold requirements.

Also, in January of 2026, historic buildings will be required to meet energy code, from which they were previously exempted.

8 - Preserves historic buildings in the DeWitt Park National Historic District

Will the concept option preserve the historic buildings in the National Register Historic District?

9 - Complements and enhances the character of the Historic District

Does the design concept complement and enhance the historic buildings adjacent to the Center of Government through its use of massing, adjacencies, materiality, scale and proportioning?

Service Integration - Convenience and Efficiency, cross discipline work



BACKGROUND

As part of the process to explore options for Tompkins County’s Center of Government facility, there is a variety of information that is shown below that may be useful in understanding the process leading up to its current status. The County owns numerous facilities, many of which are historic structures which the County has owned and maintained for many years. The County’s primary campus is located in the DeWitt Park National Register District, which includes the Old Jail, the Daniel D Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse), the Main Courthouse and Building Annex C (128 E Buffalo Street). The County’s goal is to maintain this as its main campus while adding new space adjacent to these buildings to centralize its services for the residents of Tompkins County, and to provide services that are accessible by pedestrians, by bicycle, public transportation and vehicle. The County would also like to divest of space it rents in downtown Ithaca, to reduce long-term costs to the taxpayers.

The County recognizes the importance of the economic vitality that the County’s location in downtown Ithaca represents with the 461 employees that are located here and recognizes the significance of keeping its employees and maintaining its facilities in the downtown.

Tompkins County’s Existing Facilities and Locations in Downtown Ithaca

As one can see from the list below, the County maintains many important historic structures in downtown Ithaca. The County has invested a great deal of money in their properties over the years and would like to maintain its presence in downtown Ithaca.

Name	Address	National Register	Local District
Old Jail	125 E Court St	x	x
Daniel D Tompkins Bldg (Old Courthouse)	121 E Court St	x	x
Main Courthouse	320 N Tioga St	x	x
Human Services Annex (COFA)	214 W Martin Luther King Jr St		
Human Services Building	118 N Tioga Street	x	x
Building Annex C	128 E Buffalo St	x	
Ithaca Savings & Loan Building	300 N Tioga St	x	
Professional Building	308 N Tioga St	x	
Tompkins Center for History and Culture	106-112 N Tioga St	x	x
Public Library	101 E Green St		
Mental Health Building	201 E Green St		
Department of Social Services	320 W State St		

Tompkins County’s Space Needs Summary

According to the 2023 report, “Tompkins County Downtown Facilities – A Plan for Addressing Office Space Needs” (Appendix A), the county faces a total space deficit of 33,580 departmental gross square feet (dgsf). When accounting for the departments that need to relocate to the new building, this requirement increases to 48,202 dgsf. (or 62,663 building gross square feet or bgsf). This figure also does not account for parking or the space required for natural light and setbacks around the existing buildings.

Annex C (128 E Buffalo St) is currently occupied by Tompkins County. Incorporating the two additional buildings at 300 and 308 N Tioga St could provide a limited amount of additional space. For further details, refer to the Existing Buildings Diagrams in Document 2.

Lead Agency for 1409 Review

Empire State Development Corporation (ESDC)

Site Description

The project site comprises the southeast corner of the DeWitt Park block. The block is bounded on the north by East Court Street, on the east by North Tioga Street, on the south by East Buffalo Street, and on the west by North Cayuga Street. The parcel designated for development includes Annex Building C (128 E. Buffalo St), Key Bank or the former Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building (300 N. Tioga St), and the Professional Building (308 N. Tioga St), along with a portion of their affiliated parking lots. Please refer to the diagram below.



Historic District and Description of Buildings

Tompkins County occupies four buildings within the DeWitt Park Historic District (Ithaca, NY). Please see the attached National Register Historic District nomination, Appendix B, which describes the entire district. The district was listed on the National and State Register of Historic Places in 1971 and the Old Courthouse, the Old Jail and the Main Courthouse are also designated as contributing buildings to the locally established historic district in Ithaca. The buildings owned and occupied by Tompkins County include

- the Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) which is located at 121 E Court Street;
- the Old Jail, which is located at 125 E Court Street;
- the Main Courthouse, which is located at 320 N Tioga Street; and
- Building Annex C, which is located at 128 E Buffalo Street (not designated as historic in the local district)

Each of these are listed as contributing buildings to the DeWitt Park National Register Historic District. Annex C, along with the two buildings listed below, were added to the DeWitt Park Historic National Register Historic District in the 1990's, as mid-century modern buildings, however, they have not been locally designated as contributing buildings to the local historic district.

The County recently purchased (2022)

- 300 N Tioga Street (Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building or Key Bank Building); &
- 308 N Tioga Street (The Ithaca Professional Building).

300 N. Tioga was vacant for 14 months, and it is currently being used temporarily by the County as a warming station for homeless individuals. In contrast, 308 N. Tioga, which was partially vacant for many years, remains vacant.

Both 300 N. Tioga and 308 N. Tioga were purchased with the intention of being deconstructed, as none of the three buildings—300 N. Tioga, 308 N. Tioga, or Annex Building C (128 E. Buffalo St)—were noted as contributing buildings to the National Register of Historic Places, as indicated by the CRIS system. Moreover, the County, which has owned Annex Building C since 1969, was unaware that the building had been added to the National Register during its ownership in the 1990s, when the three buildings were added to the National Register District.

Other contributing buildings within the central block of DeWitt Park—which is listed on the Local, State, and National Registers of Historic Places and not owned by the County—include the First Presbyterian Church at the southeast corner of East Court and North Cayuga Streets; the First Baptist Church at 309 North Cayuga Street, which is significantly set back from the street within DeWitt Park; and the Boardman House at 120 East Buffalo Street, which is notably affected aesthetically by its close proximity to Building Annex C (128 East Buffalo Street). Additional buildings located across the street from the DeWitt Park block are also part of the historic district, including DeWitt High School—a five-story building that was rehabilitated into DeWitt Mall more than 50 years ago.

DeWitt Park itself occupies approximately 30% of the block and is located in its southwest portion.

In the original historic district nomination prepared in 1971, Annex Building C at 128 E Buffalo St (constructed in two phases, the first in 1953 and the second in 1957), the Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building at 300 N Tioga St (1967), and the Ithaca Professional Building at 308 N Tioga St (1960) were not listed as contributing buildings due to their age. Their setbacks were inconsistent with the setbacks of the other buildings in the historic district. In contrast, other contributing buildings in the district were typically set back from the street and represented civic and ecclesiastical architecture. Boardman House, one of several residential buildings within the block, is the only remaining residential-style building in the block. Others were demolished to construct 300 and 308 N. Tioga Street. In the 1990s, all three structures (128 E Buffalo, 300 N Tioga and 308 N Tioga) were reevaluated and added to the State and National Historic Districts, although they were not incorporated into the local district.

Additional information can be found in the National Register nomination from 1971 in Appendix B; as well as the HABS documents for 300 and 308 N Tioga, Appendices F and G; and documentation for 128 E Buffalo Street, Appendix H.

Previous Studies to Explore Options for Additional Space Adjacent to the Site

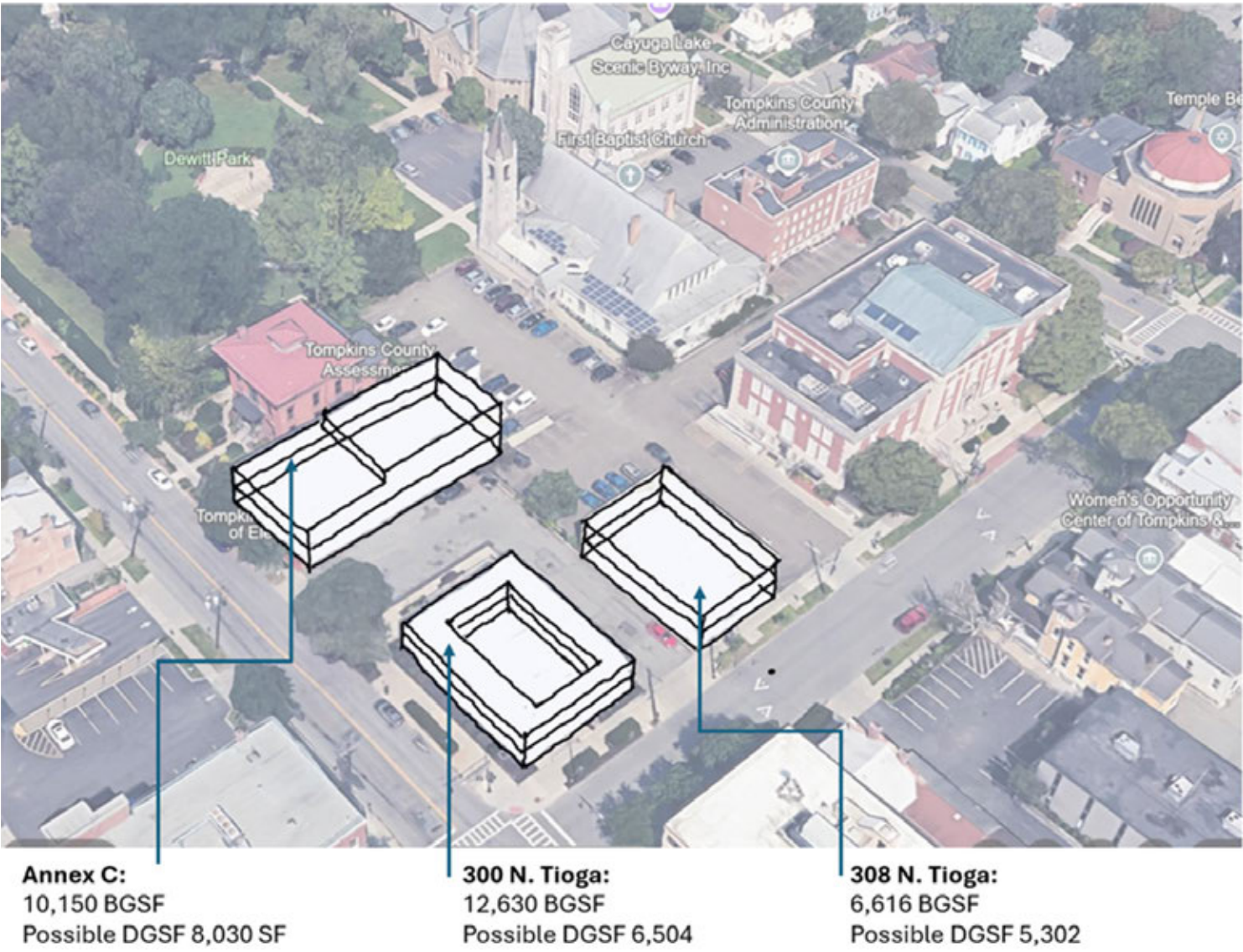
Over a span of fifteen years, numerous options were explored to identify potential sites adjacent to the current County campus that could provide the necessary additional space. Although existing County owned sites and an additional acquired site were consider previous to the current site, it was determined that the other sites would not meet the County’s requirements or adequately fulfill the need for additional space.

Existing Buildings on Project Site for Tompkins County Center of Government

The three buildings that exist on the site which is planned to be developed for the Tompkins County Center for Government, are

- 300 N Tioga Street (the Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building) completed in 1968
- 308 N Tioga Street (The Ithaca Professional Building) constructed in 1960
- Annex C, which is located at 128 E Buffalo Street, was constructed in 1953 and the second floor completed in 1957

All three buildings are mid-century modern structures.



Source: 2023 Tompkins County Downtown Facilities - A Plan for Addressing Office Space Needs



Built as a two-story bank building, the former Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building is a purpose-built steel-framed structure with glass curtain walls and a large open space on the first floor as its core. It was designed by noted Ithaca architect William Smith Downing and completed in 1968. It has four rounded concrete towers set near each corner with stairs occupying two of the towers, an elevator in another and a vault in the fourth (with bathrooms above the vault). The north portion of the first floor was used for tellers and bookkeeping and the south portion was divided into small offices along the outside wall, with the center being the banking hall. The building's historic integrity depends upon natural light from all four sides, both from an interior experience and as a character defining feature from the exterior.

The ceiling heights (except for the two-story atrium of the banking space) are relatively low with thin floor structures which would not accommodate substantial new electrical and HVAC services in order to retrofit more efficient systems.

The exterior glazing, dual glazed with tinted Falconer Durasafe 1/4" tempered safety glass appears to be the original glass in most locations. Non-insulated, non-thermally broken, non-energy efficient, and fantastically large panes of glass would be extremely difficult (and expensive) to replace. The non-insulated glass has led to the accumulation of condensation on the glass which has dripped onto the steel framing, leading to rust in numerous locations along the base of the windows. Some panes of glass are cracked and require replacement separate from the issue of there being non-insulated fenestration. It would be extremely difficult to meet energy code requirements, let alone to become the LEED Gold facility that is desired.

The steel and concrete structure creates an inflexible building system which would require the original configuration of space to be significantly maintained. Bathrooms are not handicapped accessible and the elevator would need to be replaced, however, it is not clear whether the elevator cab size would be replaceable with a standard unit, thus significantly increasing the cost of the cab for a custom unit.

The construction classification of this building, Type II Construction, is different from the other buildings, making it difficult to provide appropriate fire separations within and between each structure, the new building likely being Type I Construction. Code requires the fire ratings to be uniform throughout a structure, so the least safe classification would likely be necessary to utilize for the whole building complex being erected on the site – a costly scenario.



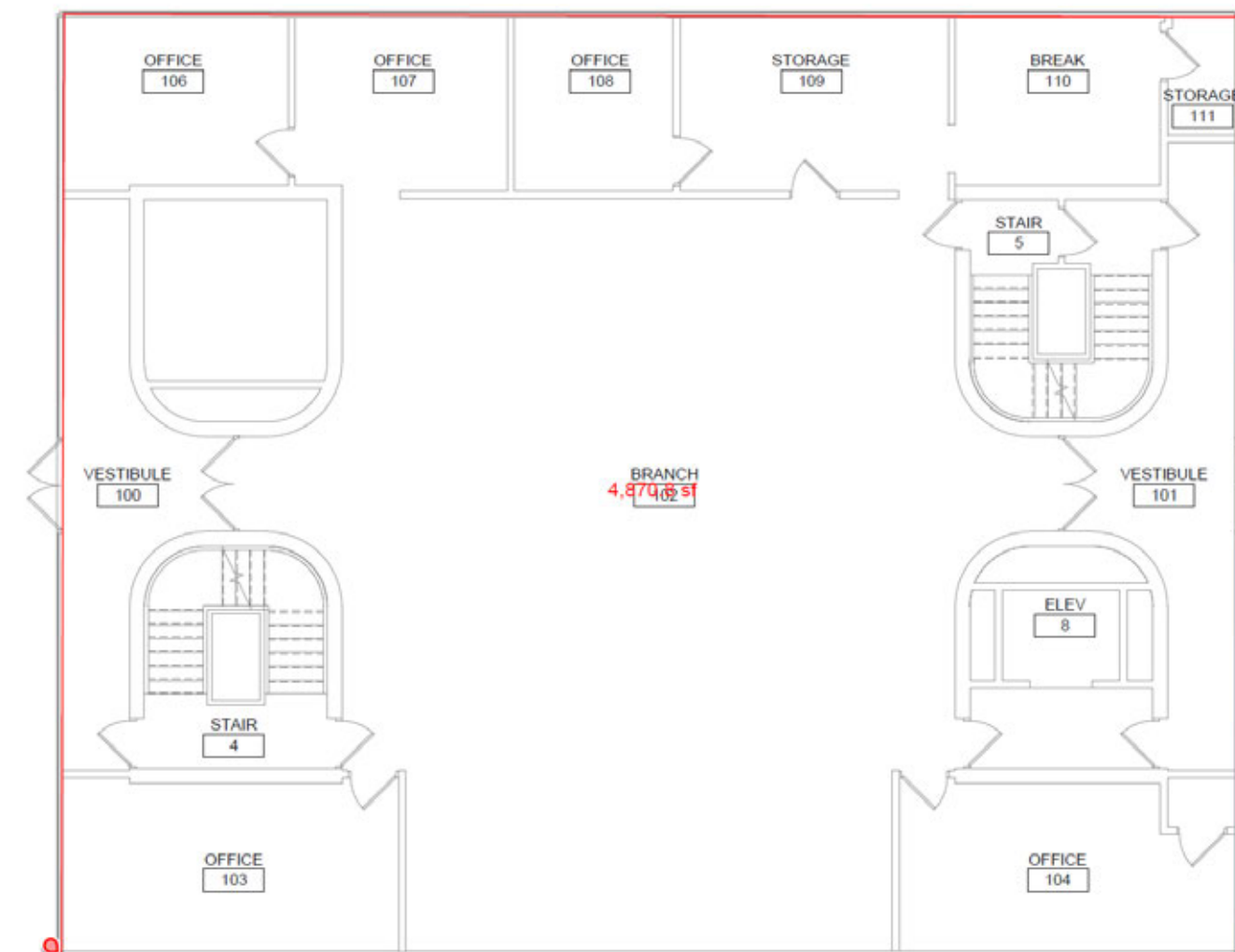
The building contains significant asbestos so will require a major hazmat intervention.

The building's layout cannot accommodate a whole department based on the existing layout of the building, its size and the challenges summarized above. The first floor could function as an entry space for the building but is bigger than the program calls for it to be, thus costing significantly more for this function than is reflected in the project budget. The second floor could be used as community meeting space, a use defined in the project program.

The floor height for the second floor would be significantly different from the floor height of the new building due to the need for there to be space to install systems between floors, so if the buildings were interconnected, significant ramping would be required and multiple elevator facilities would be necessary.

One of the significant problems with its continued use or reuse as a bank is the property's lack of, or ability to accommodate a banking drive-through. This was one of the main reasons Key Bank left the location.

See Appendix E, Facility Evaluation for 300 N Tioga St., Ithaca NY (Tetra Tech, May 2023) for additional documentation regarding the building's conditions and challenges.





308 N TIOGA STREET

The Ithaca Professional Building at 308 N Tioga Street, Ithaca, NY, was constructed in 1960 and designed by Ithaca architect, J. Victor Bagnardi. Designed as a two-story building for attorneys for developer and lawyer William Wiggins, it was also an office for physicians practices and the office for Bagnardi's architectural practice. Constructed on a concrete slab with 12" block walls and a brick veneer on three sides (and part of the fourth), the building features a glass curtain wall on 2/3 of the front façade. The glass curtain wall features a metal screen in front of the glass composed of 1,240 8" diameter steel rings welded together, with a pair of doors featuring the same steel ringed screen. The doors were removed by its previous owner and the metal screen has been donated by the previous owner to Historic Ithaca (although is still existing on the building).

With the exception of the glass curtain wall on a portion of the front of the building, the building has very limited natural light. Small windows on the first floor and slightly larger windows on the second floor limit the amount of light that the permeates the building's exterior, making it not very desirable office space either for tenants or for use by Tompkins County in its quest to provide quality space.

An open atrium in the front 2/3 of the building features a stairway that accesses the second floor (no second egress exists, which is a code issue) and the stairway has numerous code concerns which would require a second stair and some modifications to the existing stairway, despite it being an historic stairway.

The entry lobby is a large space which features the stairway with little functionality aside from the access to the second floor.

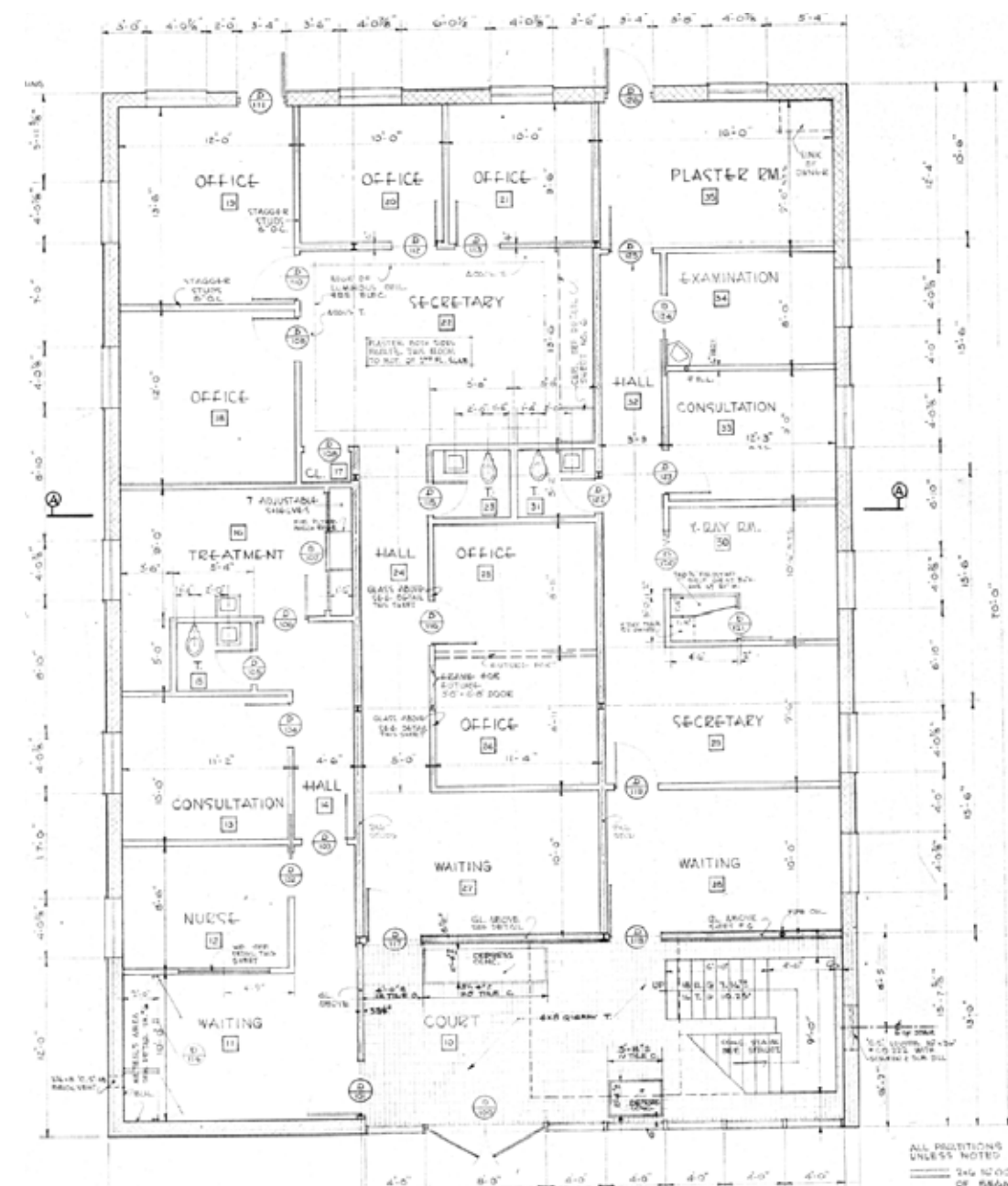
There is no fire rating between the lobby atrium and the rest of the building, so it would require some sort of retrofit to provide this fire rating. We are not aware of a method for rating this large glass wall, as even with sprinklers, large scale glazed openings are not allowed by code. They are significantly limited in size.

The floor to ceiling height is low with, like 300 N Tioga, a shallow floor plate that has little space for Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing modifications for a non-efficient HVAC system which requires replacement (and as mentioned above, it is desired to employ a geothermal system for all of the new facilities).

The building does not have an elevator, which would be required for handicapped accessibility and the existing floors are uneven, which would need to be modified using appropriate historic materials (further inhibiting the floor to ceiling height). Some structural improvements would be required and asbestos needs to be abated.

The building has a single point of entry which is its most distinctive feature and competes with the other buildings, making it difficult to have an easily navigable path throughout the County facility, with a wayfinding system that would be easily understood. The floor heights for the second floor would be significantly different from the floor height of the new building due to the need for there to be space to install systems between floors, so if the buildings were interconnected, significant ramping would be required.

for there to be space to install systems between floors, so if the buildings were interconnected, significant ramping would be required.





128 E BUFFALO STREET (ANNEX C BUILDING)

Building C was constructed in two phases for Ithaca College (formerly the Ithaca Conservatory of Music) with the first floor constructed in 1953 as a library, and the second floor being added in 1957 as a tv and radio station. Designed by architect Robert B. Tallman, a Cornell grad and the son of architect Carl Tallman with whom Tallman was in practice, Robert B. Tallman designed numerous Ithaca College buildings.

The building is located extremely close to the Boardman House, and detracts from the Boardman House's appearance due to how closely it encroaches and the fact that the setback for the buildings do not align. The roof of the Boardman House overhangs onto the property which has at times created an ice problem for the approach into 128 E Buffalo, at its current side (and main) entrance.

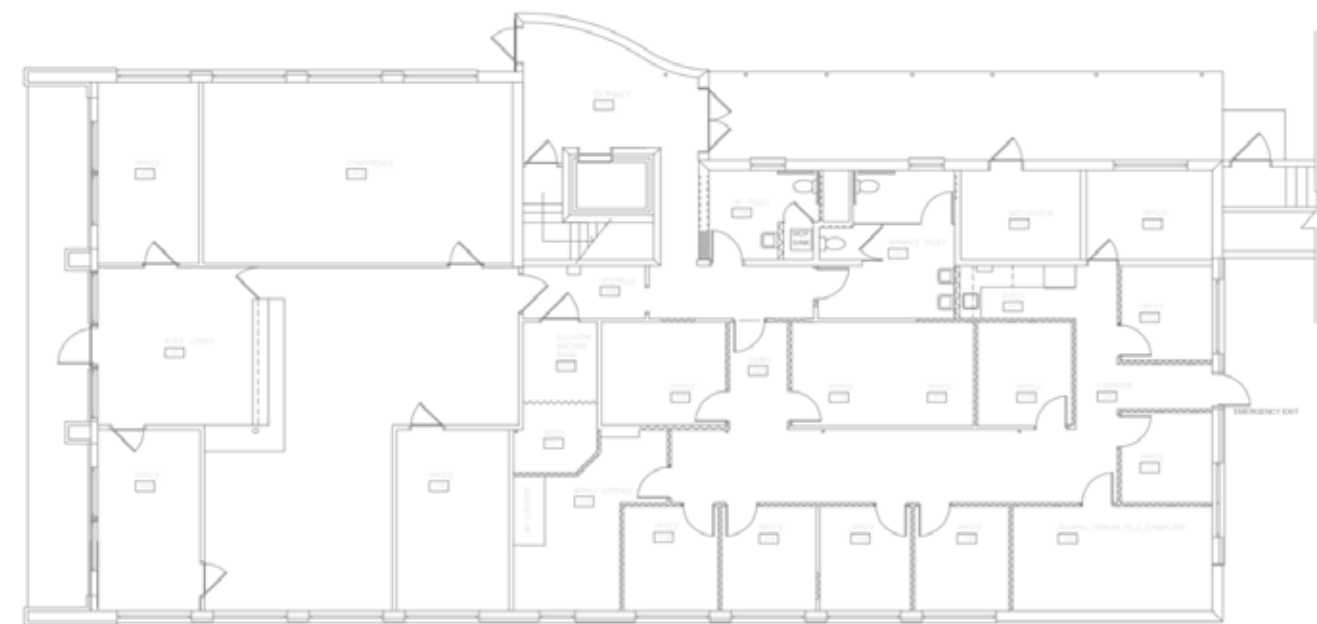
Due to the fact that Tompkins County has put off making improvements to the building while they evaluate their space needs, HVAC and other improvements have not been undertaken. The existing mechanical system is insufficient for the new building and would need to be completely replaced, ideally with the geothermal system that is being proposed for the new building.

Because the building was built as a library, and ultimately as a television and radio station, windows were not a priority for the structure. Other than the front wall when it was built as a library, its walls were used as bookshelves, and its later use didn't support the need for natural light. The building therefore has insufficient natural lighting for its use as offices, making it less than ideal space for office use.

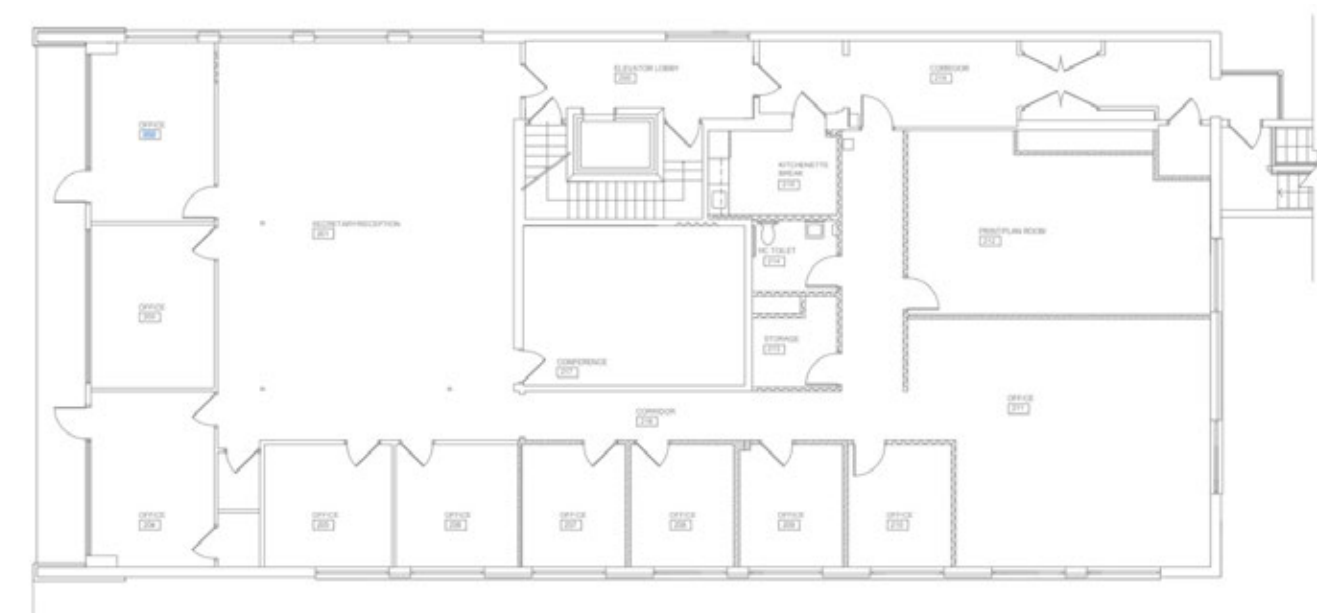
The building was purchased by Tompkins County in 1969, who has used it for offices since that time.

The floor plan consists of a warren of offices and the second floor porch is used as a smoking lounge, which is accessible through offices and not conducive to good work practices. A revised circulation path throughout the building would be necessary to provide a better user experience.

The ventilation system throughout the building is woefully inadequate as food smells permeate the office spaces. An elevator exists making accessibility possible, however the second floors of each building are not aligned, and especially not aligned with the taller first floor space that would exist in the new building, requiring ramps between buildings and independent elevator locations for each building – making it difficult to navigate throughout the facility and for providing clear wayfinding for the public.



1 ANNEX/BUILDING C - FIRST FLOOR PLAN - EXISTING
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 ANNEX/BUILDING C - SECOND FLOOR PLAN - EXISTING
1/8" = 1'-0"

DESIGN CONCEPTS

Six design concepts were developed by the project team for the Tompkins County’s Center of Government Project. Each concept was evaluated against 19 measurable goals that were derived from the original nine Public Service Goals/Considerations detailed on pages 7-8. Many of the Public Service Goals consist of several measurable goals. Each of the 19 measurable goals used to evaluate the Design Concepts are defined below.

County Compliance Goals:

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

This goal illustrates the building gross square footage (bgsf) required to accommodate the 48,202 departmental gross square footage (dgsf) defined in the space program. You will see that many of concepts require significantly more bgsf to accommodate necessary circulation between the various floor elevations of historic and new structures.

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

For years there have been significant inequities in the quality of space among the county departments within buildings throughout the city. This goal measures the success of each concept in its ability to provide high quality space with regard to various attributes such as natural light and views, accessibility, appropriately sized spaces, and quality of interior climate control.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

This goal measures the ability of each Concept to adjust over time to the needs of departments as they shrink or grow. It also considers the possibility that the County will add new departments in the future that the building will need to accommodate. Space must be flexible and easily adaptable to accommodate the evolving needs of the community over the next 100 years.

Goal 4: Security

This goal measures the ability of each Concept to protect County employees and residents visiting the facility from outside threats. The County hopes to consolidate security into a single checkpoint for efficiency.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

As a government agency, Tompkins County must meet or exceed all relevant NY State Building and Energy Codes.

Meets County capital budget for the project:

Goal 6: Meets County capital budget for the project

The County has a construction budget of \$35,000,000 for this project. This goal measures the success of each Concept in meeting this goal.

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

Structural remediation associated with building over or building adjacent to existing buildings adds construction cost to projects. This goal measures the level of structural challenges associated with each Concept.

Maintains and enhances downtown economic vitality:

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

This goal measures each Concept’s ability to provide the opportunity to enhance the social and economic vitality of downtown Ithaca and the Dewitt Park Historic District by keeping the facility in downtown Ithaca. Loss of the County’s employees downtown would negatively impact downtown Ithaca’s prosperity and vitality significantly.

Meets parking needs and requirements:

Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements

The larger the footprint of the building structure(s), the less site space is available to accommodate the needs of employee and visitor parking. Some options require the addition of a below-grade parking structure to make all options comparable in terms of parking counts. A detailed parking and traffic study is contracted and will be underway soon. Additionally, the County must also consider its ability to provide sufficient parking access as required by the NYS Unified Court System located in the adjacent Main Courthouse.



Provides equitable access to services in this location with frequent bus service and a large population within walking and biking distance:

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

This goal measures the public’s ability to access the facility by public transportation, as a pedestrian or by bicycle.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

As a County facility providing services to the public, all accessibility requirements must be met. This goal measures the success of each Concept in meeting those requirements.

Goal 12: Entrances

This goal measures how clear and intuitive it is for a County residents to find the entrance to the building in order to access the services they are seeking.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

This goal measures how clear and intuitive it is for a County resident to navigate the building once they are inside.

Meets County’s Green Building Policy requirements:

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

This project must not only comply with NY State Energy Code requirements, but must also meet the much more stringent County Green Energy Policy. This goal measures the ability of each Concept to comply. Note: As of January 2025, Historic Buildings will be required to comply with Energy Code.

Goal 15: Natural Light

As an office building, it will contain many small cellular spaces that require daylight and views. This goal measures the ability of each Concept to provide access to daylight and views.

Complements and enhances the character of the Historic District:

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

This goal measures the success of each Concept in conforming to the massing of the existing historic district and its adjacent buildings.

Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials & Aesthetics

This goal measures the success of each Concept in conforming to the exterior materials and aesthetics of the existing historic district and its adjacent buildings.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

For many years, the County has maintained the interior finishes of buildings throughout the City with very limited operational resources. This goal measures the ability of the interior finishes and materials to stand up to the test of time, reducing necessary annual operational investments.

Preserves contributing buildings to the Historic District:

Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

The County has a great history of preserving and restoring its historic stock of buildings. This goal measures the success of each Concept for its preservation of existing historic structures.



CONCEPT 1

Utilize Three Existing Buildings

Square Footage Needs for Tompkins County’s facilities:

The square footage of the three existing building totals **19,836 dgsf** (departmental gross square footage – which does not include circulation space), which is comprised of

- 6,504 dgsf

300 N Tioga St
- 5,302 dgsf

308 N Tioga St
- 8,302 dgsf

128 E Buffalo (C)

The required departmental gross square footage identified by the County and the Architects is **48,202 dgsf**. This represents a shortfall of **28,366 dgsf** and using just the three existing buildings to provide additional space for the Tompkins County Center of Government does not provide adequate space for the project’s needs. Because this option of utilizing just the three existing buildings did not meet the square footage requirements for the project, no further analysis was developed (which is why the matrix shown in the Comparative Analysis shows “N/A” for each measurable goal.

Option 1				
Existing 3 Buildings Only			1.08	escil 2023 to 2025
Building	BGSF	DGSF	2023 cost	2025 cost
300 N Tioga	12,630	6,504	\$4,900,000.00	\$5,292,000.00
308 N Tioga	6,616	5,302	\$4,000,000.00	\$4,320,000.00
Annex C	10,150	8,030	\$4,000,000.00	\$4,320,000.00
TOTAL	29396	19836	\$12,900,000.00	\$13,932,000.00



CONCEPT 2

Rehabilitate Three Existing Buildings & Build Addition Space Between

This concept explores the possibility of reusing the site while incorporating all three existing buildings (addresses noted), along with the addition of a new building (represented in white). The existing buildings would undergo rehabilitation, and a new structure would be created with two levels of below-grade parking (see diagram above). To the right of 308 N Tioga is the Courthouse, owned by the County, and to the left of 128 E Buffalo is the Boardman House—both of which are historic buildings within the DeWitt Park Historic District.

Given the limited space between the buildings and the loss of surface parking currently in place, a new, narrow building would be designed to fit within this space. This new structure would need to be set back from the three historic buildings to ensure adequate natural light and preserve the functional space within the existing buildings that previously had views of the environment around them. Modifications to 128 E Buffalo and 308 N Tioga, such as adding or enlarging windows, would be necessary to meet the County's requirements for natural light. These alterations would significantly negatively impact the historic integrity of the buildings.

It would be difficult to meet accessibility requirements going from building to building via a complex system of ramps as well as having to exit each building to access another building, including accessibility to the second floor of each building from its own elevator (not existent in 308 N Tioga St).

Due to the required square footage, the new building would tower above the two-story buildings.

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

The square footage of the existing building totals **19,836 dgsf** (departmental gross square footage – which does not include circulation space), which is comprised of

6,504 dgsf	300 N Tioga St
5,302 dgsf	308 N Tioga St
8,302 dgsf	128 E Buffalo (C)

The required departmental gross square footage identified by the County is 48,202 dgsf

This represents a shortfall of 28,366 dgsf

A 12’ wide connector around each existing building would be integrated into the design of the project to avoid cutting off the natural light and windows of these buildings. This equates to 9,516 bgsf, which is not useable square footage for department programming. Due to the site footprint of these four buildings, a 2-story below grade parking garage is also proposed to preserve the required parking. The total gross building square footage of this Concept is 102,588 SF.

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

The wide variety of building conditions, fenestration patterns, accessibility challenges, size of spaces and access to the public make it difficult for this option to meet the requirements to establish equity between departments and quality of space, priorities of the County.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

The rehabilitation of the three existing buildings would not allow for the flexible arrangement of space as it adapts to changing needs over time that the County is seeking for the new facility. The narrow space that would be required for the new building would also not provide much flexibility for the County as it changes its needs over time.

The challenge here is really that each of the existing buildings has a defined amount of sf available for department use. Unless one or two departments happen to fit nicely into the building, it is very difficult to use the space efficiently. It is also difficult to accommodate changes in the size of departments over time when the space is so limited and inflexible.

Goal 4: Security

Due to the number of entrances and exits from four separate buildings, security would be a difficult challenge to overcome - functionally, financially and programmatically.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

Beginning in January 2026, historic buildings will have to comply with Energy Code according to the International Building Code, and the blueprint for NYS’s Building Code. This will pose a major issue for 300 N Tioga and possibly 308 N Tioga Street which will be very difficult to meet. A second stairway will be required for 308 N Tioga Street, as well as an elevator.

Goal 6: Meets County Capital Budget for the project

Option 2				
New Infill Building With 3 Existing Buildings				
Building	BGSF	DGSF	Cost	Cost/SF
Reno 300 N Tioga	12,630	6,504	\$5,292,000.00	
Reno 308 N Tioga	6,616	5,302	\$4,320,000.00	
Reno Annex C	10,150	8,030	\$4,320,000.00	
New Building	36,876	28,366	\$19,912,932.00	\$540.00
New Building Connections	9,516		\$5,138,640.00	\$540.00
2 Story Underground Parking	26,800		\$9,380,000.00	\$350.00
SUB TOTAL	102,588	48,202	\$48,363,572.00	
Escalation to 2028			\$4,836,357.20	0.10
TOTAL			\$53,199,929.20	

The cost to rehabilitate the existing buildings (please see Appendix C, Facility Evaluation for Key Bank or Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building at 300 N Tioga for cost estimate; and Appendix E, Structural Building Renovation Feasibility Study) is \$15,325,200.00 (including escalation to 2028). The cost to build the new building (\$540/sf) is slightly higher for this option based on the need for underpinning the adjacent foundations.

The total cost for the project utilizing all three existing buildings plus new construction (including parking) is estimated at \$ 53,199,929. This is \$18 million over the County’s \$35M construction budget, which is a major concern for the County.

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

Construction on this site will require complicated structural remediation to allow for new foundations to be built adjacent to existing foundations, which will involve significant underpinning of these existing foundations. This will be especially difficult to accomplish with parking on a sub-terranean level. In addition, excavation and the vibration caused by excavation so close to the existing buildings could have a detrimental effect on the structural framing of existing structures. A study was undertaken to look at adding height to the existing buildings (which we recognize is not a solution that maintains historic integrity), and it was determined that adding height to the existing buildings was not an option structurally.

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

This concept, which allows the County to stay in Ithaca’s downtown, which is really important to the economic vitality of Ithaca’s historic infrastructure, allows the new facility to stay in downtown Ithaca.

Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements



Given that the site is fully occupied by existing buildings and new construction, there is no opportunity to provide additional surface parking space; therefore, all extra parking must be constructed beneath the new portion of the building. Excavating adjacent to the existing structures is particularly challenging because it risks compromising their structural integrity. Consequently, providing parking for County residents who visit the building for County services becomes both difficult and expensive unless it is built underground—a significant expense and challenging option.

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Maintaining the Center of Government in downtown Ithaca is crucial because it provides convenient access to services for both visitors and employees through buses, walking, and bicycling—modes of transportation that are highly valued by the County and its constituents. Downtown represents the largest concentration of residents in the County and ensures accessibility for people who do not have a vehicle. Moreover, a number of elderly residents who live downtown walk to their destinations, and many downtown residents choose not to own a vehicle in an effort to live more “green.” Preserving the facility’s downtown location is extremely important.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

The existing floor heights for each building are different from one building to the next, making it difficult to navigate between buildings while maintaining accessibility paths without providing a complicated and extensive system of ramps and elevators throughout the facility.

Goal 12: Entrances

This option creates a confusing scenario for entrance into the County facilities since there is no dominant path to enter the buildings with so many buildings to navigate. This is especially important for the many seniors who access services, as well as County residents who have mobility challenges.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

The user experience in this facility will be challenging because it consists of four different buildings, each with its own unique layout and no common navigational reference points. In addition to the elevators required in the new building, the elevators in the existing buildings must be retrofitted to meet accessibility standards. Moreover, since the second floor of the new building will be significantly higher than those in the existing structures, occupants on the second floor of one building will need to descend to the first floor and then ascend again to reach the second floor of an adjacent building.

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

An important criteria for the County is that the facility should be sustainable. This is a challenge from a number of perspectives, not the least of which is that the glazing in 300 N Tioga features extremely large single paned glass panels. New HVAC systems for all three existing buildings need to be installed. The County is currently conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of a geothermal heating and cooling system for the County campus, which would include any new office space. Incorporating the existing buildings into such a system would be challenging and expensive plan since the floor to ceiling heights in the existing buildings are difficult to retrofit due to their low heights.

The shells and roofs of 308 N Tioga and 128 E Buffalo Street would need to be insulated, thereby impacting the interior finishes of each building. It is not clear how 300 N Tioga could be retrofitted to be sustainably designed due to the single thickness glazing system, which has window panels of a size that are not known how to replace them, especially if they are to be insulated glass.

Goal 15: Natural Light

Due to the importance of respecting the natural lighting for each building, it has been determined that a setback needs to be established around each of the existing buildings which would also allow for natural light to enter both the existing buildings and the new facility. This is not only to be respectful of the character defining feature of natural light for 300 N Tioga which exists on all four sides of the building, but also because of the County’s priority of natural light for its employees. Inasmuch as this approach will help with natural lighting issues, it will still compromise the overall quality and quantity of natural lighting.

Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

This option keeps all three historic buildings that exist in the DeWitt Park Historic District, and enables the County to continue to utilize their other historic buildings adjacent to the new Center of Government.

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

The need for square footage required for the new building means that the new structure, a five-story building, would tower above its two-story neighbors. The new building would be significantly taller and out of scale with these much shorter buildings, which are not only shorter because they are two stories, but also because public civic buildings have taller floor to ceiling heights. Although the new building would be closer in height to the other buildings in the historic district, it would dwarf the smaller purpose-built mid-century modern structures, and therefore not be a very sympathetic solution.

Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials & Aesthetics

The three existing buildings, although all mid-century modern buildings, are all quite different in their aesthetic and make it really difficult to design a building that marries all three buildings in a way that the new building can successfully combine, since the exterior materials are different for each building. This is even more challenging when you consider how to tie in the design aesthetic for the Courthouse, Old Jail, Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse), the churches and Boardman House. The exterior material choice is a difficult challenge to resolve since the materials of all three buildings are different, which also contrast with the other historic buildings adjacent to the building site.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

The County sees this project as one which needs to stand the test of time and that the materials utilized be high quality finishes that will be resilient to the many users of the space. The finishes in the historic buildings do not always reflect this ability to stand up to the test of time, especially as seen in 308 N Tioga.



CONCEPT 3

Rehabilitate Three Existing Buildings & Build T-Shaped Building Between

(second option for keeping three existing buildings)

This concept explores the possibility of reusing the site while incorporating all three existing buildings (addresses noted), along with the addition of a new building (represented in white). The existing buildings would undergo rehabilitation, and a new structure, along with two levels of below-grade parking, would be constructed between them (see diagram above). To the right of 308 N Tioga is the Courthouse, owned by the County, and to the left of 128 E Buffalo is the Boardman House—both of which are historic buildings within the DeWitt Park Historic District.

Given the limited space between the buildings and the loss of surface parking currently in place, a new, narrow building would have to be designed to fit within this space. This new structure would need to be set back from the three historic buildings to ensure adequate natural light. Modifications to 128 E Buffalo and 308 N Tioga, such as adding or enlarging windows, would be necessary to meet the County's requirements for natural light. However, these alterations would significantly impact the historic integrity of the buildings.

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

The square footage of the existing building totals **19,836 dgsf** (departmental gross square footage – which does not include circulation space), which is comprised of

6,504 dgsf	300 N Tioga St
5,302 dgsf	308 N Tioga St
8,302 dgsf	128 E Buffalo (C)

The required departmental gross square footage identified by the County is 48,202 dgsf

This represents a shortfall of 28,366 dgsf

A 12’ wide connector around each existing building would be integrated into the design of the project to avoid cutting off the natural light and windows of these buildings. This equates to 7,908 bgsf, which is not useable square footage for department programming. Due to the site footprint of these four buildings, a 2-story below grade parking garage is also budgeted to preserve the required parking. The total gross building square footage of this Concept is 100,980 SF.

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

Same as Concept 2 analysis. The wide variety of building conditions, fenestration patterns, accessibility, size of spaces and access to the public make it difficult for there to be equity between departments and quality of space, priorities for the County.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

Same as Concept2 Analysis. The rehabilitation of the three existing buildings would not allow for the flexible arrangement of space that the County is seeking for the new facility. The narrow space that would be required for the new building would also not provide much flexibility for the County as it changes its needs over time.

The challenge here is really that each of the existing buildings has a defined amount of sf available for department use. Unless one or two departments happen to fit nicely into the building, it is very difficult to use the space efficiently. It is also difficult to accommodate changes in the size of departments over time when the space is so limited and inflexible.

Goal 4: Security

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Due to the number of entrances and exits from four separate buildings, security would be a difficult challenge to overcome - functionally, financially and programmatically.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Beginning in January 2026, historic buildings will have to comply with Energy Code according to the International Building Code, and the blueprint for NYS’s Building Code. This will pose a major issue for 300 N Tioga and possibly 308 N Tioga Street which will be very difficult to meet. A second stairway will be required for 308 N Tioga Street, as well as an elevator.

Goal 6: Meets County Capital Budget for the project

Option 3				
New Infill Building With 3 Existing Buildings				
Building	BGSF	DGSF	Cost	Cost/SF
Reno 300 N Tioga	12,630	6,504	\$5,292,000.00	
Reno 308 N Tioga	6,616	5,302	\$4,320,000.00	
Reno Annex C	10,150	8,030	\$4,320,000.00	
New Building Program	36,876	28,366	\$19,912,932.00	\$540.00
New Building Connections	7,908		\$4,270,320.00	\$540.00
2 Story Underground Parking	26,800		\$9,380,000.00	\$350.00
SUB TOTAL	100,980	48,202	\$47,495,252.00	
Escalation to 2028			\$4,749,525.20	0.10
TOTAL			\$52,244,777.20	

The cost to rehabilitate the existing buildings (please see Appendix C, Facility Evaluation for Key Bank or Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building at 300 N Tioga for cost estimate; and Appendix E, Structural Building Renovation Feasibility Study) is \$15,325,200.00 (including escalation to 2028). The cost to build the new building (\$540/sf) is slightly higher for this option based on the need for underpinning the adjacent foundations.

The total cost for the project utilizing all three existing buildings plus new construction (including parking) is estimated at \$ 52,244,777. This is \$17 million over the County’s \$35M construction budget, which is a major concern for the County.

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Construction on this site will require complicated structural remediation to allow for new foundations to be built adjacent to existing foundations, which will involve significant underpinning of these existing foundations. This will be especially difficult to accomplish with parking on a sub-terranean level. In addition, excavation and the vibration caused by excavation so close to the existing buildings could have a detrimental effect on the structural framing of existing structures. A study was undertaken to look at adding height to the existing buildings (which we recognize is not a solution that maintains historic integrity), and it was determined that adding height to the existing buildings was not an option structurally.

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. This concept, which allows the County to stay in Ithaca's downtown, which is really important to the economic vitality of Ithaca's historic infrastructure, allows the new facility to stay in downtown Ithaca.



Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Given that the site is fully occupied by existing buildings and new construction, there is no opportunity to provide additional surface parking space; therefore, all extra parking must be constructed beneath the new portion of the building. Excavating adjacent to the existing structures is particularly challenging because it risks compromising their structural integrity. Consequently, providing parking for County residents who visit the building for County services becomes both difficult and expensive unless it is built underground—a significant expense and challenging option.

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Maintaining the Center of Government in downtown Ithaca is crucial because it provides convenient access to services for both visitors and employees through buses, walking, and bicycling—modes of transportation that are highly valued by the County and its constituents. Downtown represents the largest concentration of residents in the County and ensures accessibility for people who do not have a vehicle. Moreover, a number of elderly residents who live downtown walk to their destinations, and many downtown residents choose not to own a vehicle in an effort to live more “green.” Preserving the facility’s downtown location is extremely important.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. The existing floor heights for each building are different from one building to the next, making it difficult to navigate between buildings while maintaining accessibility paths without providing a complicated and extensive system of ramps and elevators throughout the facility.

Goal 12: Entrances

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. This option creates a confusing scenario for entrance into the County facilities since there is no dominant path to enter the buildings with so many buildings to navigate. This is especially important for the many seniors who access services, as well as County residents who have mobility challenges.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. The user experience in this facility will be challenging because it consists of four different buildings, each with its own unique layout and no common navigational reference points. In addition to the elevators required in the new building, the elevators in the existing buildings must be retrofitted to meet accessibility standards. Moreover, since the second floor of the new building will be significantly higher than those in the existing structures, occupants on the second floor of one building will need to descend to the first floor and then ascend again to reach the second floor of an adjacent building.

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. An important criteria for the County is that the facility should be sustainable. This is a challenge from a number of perspectives, not the least of which is that the glazing in 300 N Tioga features extremely large single paned glass panels. New HVAC systems for all three existing buildings need to be installed. The County is currently conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of a geothermal heating and cooling system for the County campus, which would include any new office space. Incorporating the existing buildings into such a system would be challenging and expensive plan since the floor to ceiling heights in the existing buildings are difficult to retrofit due to their low heights.

The shells and roofs of 308 N Tioga and 128 E Buffalo Street would need to be insulated, thereby impacting the interior finishes of each building. It is not clear how 300 N Tioga could be retrofitted to be sustainably designed due to the single thickness glazing system, which has window panels of a size that are not known how to replace them, especially if they are to be insulated glass.

Goal 15: Natural Light

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Due to the importance of respecting the natural lighting for each building, it has been determined that a setback needs to be established around each of the existing buildings which would also allow for natural light to enter both the existing buildings and the new facility. This is not only to be respectful of the character defining feature of natural light for 300 N Tioga which exists on all four sides of the building, but also because of the County’s priority of natural light for its employees. Inasmuch as this approach will help with natural lighting issues, it will still compromise the overall quality and quantity of natural lighting.

Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. This option keeps all three historic buildings that exist in the DeWitt Park Historic District, and enables the County to continue to utilize their other historic buildings adjacent to the new Center of Government.

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. The need for square footage required for the new building means that the new structure, a five-story building, would tower above its two-story neighbors. The new building would be significantly taller and out of scale with these much shorter buildings, which are not only shorter because they are two stories, but also because the floor to ceiling height of a civic building has, by virtue of being a public civic building, taller floor to ceiling heights. Although the new building would be closer in height to the other buildings in the historic district, it would dwarf the smaller purpose-built mid-century modern structures, and therefore not be a very sympathetic solution.

Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials & Aesthetics

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. The three existing buildings, although all mid-century modern buildings, are all quite different in their aesthetic and make it really difficult to design a building that marries all three buildings in a way that the new building can successfully combine, since the exterior materials are different for each building. This is even more challenging when you consider how to tie in the design aesthetic for the Courthouse, Old Jail, Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse), the churches and Boardman House. The exterior material choice is a difficult challenge to resolve since the materials of all three buildings are different, which also contrast with the other historic buildings adjacent to the building site.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. The County sees this project as one which needs to stand the test of time and that the materials utilized be high quality finishes that will be resilient to the many users of the space. The finishes in the historic buildings do not always reflect this ability to stand up to the test of time, especially as seen in 308 N Tioga.



CONCEPT 4

Rehabilitate One Existing Buildings & Build Additional Space Around It

(Maintains 300 N Tioga Street)

This concept tests the possibility of reusing and integrating 300 N Tioga Street into the design of a new building (shown in white), while deconstructing the buildings at 308 N Tioga Street and 128 E Buffalo Street. The existing building would be rehabilitated, and a new building and one story of below-grade parking would be placed on the site (see diagram above). To the right of the new building that fronts N Tioga would be parking and the existing Courthouse, owned by the County, and to the left of the new building on Buffalo St is the Boardman House—both of which are historic buildings within the DeWitt Park Historic District.

This option involves setting back the new building from the east side of the Boardman House to reduce its uncomfortably close proximity to its neighbor to the east (where Building Annex C is currently located and sits directly on the property line). However, the setback does not match the front setback of the Boardman House. The front setbacks of the new building on E Buffalo and North Tioga Streets are aligned with the building at 300 N Tioga Street in order to relate to the corner building, but we do not consider this to be the optimal positioning when compared to the rest of the historic district and the setbacks of other historic buildings. It would be awkward to set back the new building in a way that does not relate to the building on the corner (300 N Tioga) but it would also require the new building to be taller in order to provide the needed square footage. Materials from the deconstructed buildings would be offered for reuse and historic elements mutually determined appropriate for display could be mounted in the new facility.

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

In this option we would repurpose 300 N Tioga street to be utilized as the shared community space and possibly the main entrance and security checkpoint for the facility. We believe that we would be able to functionally program 3,500 dgsf of the 12,636 bgsf of this structure. . This option would be more efficient than Concepts 2 and 3, since most of the new program space would be in the new structure.

3500 dgsf

300 N Tioga St

The required departmental gross square footage identified by the County is 48,202 dgsf. This represents a shortfall of 44,702 dgsf which would be built in the new facility.

A 12’ wide connector around the north and west sides of the existing building would be integrated into the design of the building to avoid cutting off the natural light and windows of this building- a character defining feature of the building. It would also be necessary to maintain this distance in order to provide natural light for the new structure. This connector equates to 1,773 bgsf, which is not usable square footage for departmental space. Due to the site footprint of these two buildings, a 1-story below grade parking garage is also budgeted to preserve the required parking. The total gross building square footage of this Concept is 85,916 SF.

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

With a majority of the complex being in newly designed building, there would be equity between departments, a priority for the County. The new portion of the facility would be able to be designed to have comparable features between departments.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

The new portion of the building would be designed to accommodate flexible arrangements of departmental space that the County is seeking for the new facility.

Goal 4: Security

Security in the new building could be handled adequately. Security in the existing building may have some challenges to overcome with the historic entryway.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

Beginning in January 2026, historic buildings will have to comply with Energy Code according to the International Building Code, which is the blueprint for NYS’s Building Code. This will pose a major issue for 300 N Tioga Street which will be very difficult to meet due to the building’s single paned glass exterior, and the size of the glass panels. The requirement for two forms of egress is met in the existing building, as is access to the second floor by elevator, although the size of the elevator may not meet ADA requirements (to be determined). The new portion of the building, would be designed to meet the energy code and all aspects of the NYS Building Code.

Goal 6: Meets County Capital Budget for the Project

Option 4				
New Building with 300 N Tioga				
Building	BGSF	DGSF	Cost	Cost/SF
Deconstruct Reno 308 N Tioga	6,616		\$198,480.00	\$30.00
Deconstruct Reno Annex C	10,150		\$304,500.00	\$30.00
Renovate 300 N Tioga (public space)	12,630	3,500	\$5,292,000.00	
New Building	58,113	44,702	\$30,799,678.00	\$530.00
New Building Connections	1,773		\$939,690.00	\$530.00
1 Story Underground Parking	13,400		\$4,690,000.00	\$350.00
SUB TOTAL	85,916	48,202	\$42,224,348.00	
Escalation to 2028			\$4,222,434.80	0.10
TOTAL			\$46,446,782.80	

The cost to rehabilitate 300 N Tioga St, the existing building remaining on the site (please see Appendix C, Facility Evaluation for Key Bank or Ithaca Savings and Loan Association Building at 300 N Tioga for cost estimate) is \$5,821,200 (including escalation to 2028). The costs for deconstruction are \$ 553,278 (including costs for escalation to 2028). The cost to build the new building (at \$530/sf) for this option is based on the construction cost plus the need for underpinning the foundation of one existing building (compared to \$540/sf for Concepts 2 and 3; and \$500/sf for Concept 5).

The total cost for the project, including rehabilitation of 300 N Tioga, deconstruction of the other two buildings plus the Center of Government’s new construction and parking is estimated at \$ 46,446,782.80. This is \$11 million more than the county’s budget of \$35M, which is a major concern for the County.

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

Construction on this site will require complicated structural remediation to allow for new foundations to be built adjacent to the existing foundation for 300 N Tioga St, which will involve significant underpinning of its existing foundations. This will be especially challenging to accomplish with parking on a sub-terranean level. In addition, excavation and the vibration caused by excavation so close to the existing building could have a detrimental effect on the structural framing of existing structure.

A study was undertaken to look at adding height to the existing buildings (which we recognize is not a solution that maintains historic integrity), and it was determined that adding height to the existing buildings was not an option structurally.

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. This concept, which allows the County to stay in Ithaca's downtown, which is really important to the economic vitality of Ithaca’s historic infrastructure, allows the new facility to stay in downtown Ithaca.



Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements

Since the site, in this scenario, is significantly but not totally taken up by the new construction plus the building at the corner of E Buffalo N Tioga Streets, there is a limited opportunity to provide a small number of surface parking spaces, and a one story parking facility would need to go beneath the new portion of the building. It is especially difficult to excavate adjacent to the existing building without impacting its structural integrity. It is not feasible to provide all the parking as surface parking on the site and therefore it would be required to build beneath the new building, a significant expense and challenging option. Parking near the entrance to the facility is not feasible, making it a challenge for County residents and employees who have a frequent need for access to a vehicle.

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Same as Concept 2 Analysis. Maintaining the Center of Government in downtown Ithaca is crucial because it provides convenient access to services for both visitors and employees through buses, walking, and bicycling—modes of transportation that are highly valued by the County and its constituents. Downtown represents the largest concentration of residents in the County and ensures accessibility for people who do not have a vehicle. Moreover, a number of elderly residents who live downtown walk to their destinations, and many downtown residents choose not to own a vehicle in an effort to live more “green.” Preserving the facility’s downtown location is extremely important.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

Accessibility to the second floor of the corner building would need to be independent from the rest of the complex since the second floor of 300 N Tioga would be substantially lower than the second floor of the new complex and since there would need to be a gap between the buildings to preserve the character defining feature of the building’s natural light. ADA compliance could be fully met within the new building.

Goal 12: Entrances

Entrance into Concept 4 would likely be through the historic building at the corner of E Buffalo and N Tioga Streets (300 N Tioga), and the building would also be used for public meeting spaces on the second floor. As a logical entrance building, 300 N Tioga would not be able to house any County departments due to its limited size, and it would be difficult to provide parking near this entrance.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

Once the user of this facility exits from the entry building to the main portion of the complex, a wayfinding system would have to be defined for the next part of the visitor’s sequence through the space. This makes the entry building somewhat redundant since a new wayfinding system cannot be truly defined until you enter the new portion of the building, which will require another lobby space in the new portion of the building.

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

An important criterion for the County is that the facility should be sustainable, especially considering that the building needs to accommodate its needs for the next 100 years. This is a challenge from a number of perspectives, not the least of which is that the glazing in 300 N Tioga features extremely large single paned glass panels, for which we have not found suitable replacements at this time. A new HVAC system for the existing building needs to be installed, The County is currently conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of a geothermal heating and cooling system for the County campus, which would include any new office space.

Incorporating the existing building into such a system would be challenging and expensive plan since the floor to ceiling heights in the existing buildings are difficult to retrofit due to their low heights. It is not clear how 300 N Tioga could be retrofitted to be sustainably designed due to the single thickness glazing system, which has window panels of a size that are not known how to replace them, especially if they are to be insulated glass.

The County’s goal is to make this facility a LEED Gold project, which is not feasible for 300 N Tioga.

Goal 15: Natural Light

Due to the importance of respecting the natural lighting for the structure at 300 N Tioga Street, which is a character defining feature of the building, it has been determined that a setback needs to be established on the north and west sides of the existing building which would also allow for natural light to enter both the existing building and the new facility. This is not only to be respectful of the character defining feature of natural light for 300 N Tioga which exists on all four sides of the building, but also because of the County’s priority of natural light for its employees. Inasmuch as this approach will help with natural lighting issues, it will still compromise the overall quality and quantity of natural lighting emitted into the buildings, due to the close proximity of the buildings.

Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

Concept 4 preserves 300 N Tioga, however, Building Annex C and 308 N Tioga would be deconstructed. The County’s other facilities in the historic district would be maintained and further work to renew and preserve the interior of the Old Jail and Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) would be undertaken as a part of this project.

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

The need for square footage required for the new building means that the new structure, a four/five-story building, would tower above its two-story neighbor. The new building would be significantly taller and out of scale with this much shorter mid-century building, which is not only shorter because it is two stories in height, but also because the floor to ceiling height of a civic building has, by virtue of being a public civic building, taller floor to ceiling heights. Although the new building would be closer in height to the other civic buildings in the historic district, it would dwarf the smaller purpose-built mid-century modern structure and would be difficult to marry the buildings without overwhelming the scale of the mid-century building- not a very sympathetic solution.

Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials and Aesthetics

As a mid-century modern building among the predominantly late 19th and early 20th century buildings, the vocabulary of 300 N Tioga St is quite different from the rest of the historic district. Designing a building to address these diametrically different structures would be a challenge, especially since the mid-century modern structure features glass and steel, a substantially different proportioning system and materials than the Courthouse, Old Jail, Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse), the churches and Boardman House. The exterior material choice is a difficult challenge to resolve since the materials used for 300 N Tioga contrast so dramatically with the other historic buildings adjacent to the building site.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

The County sees this project as one which needs to stand the test of time and that the materials utilized to be high quality finishes that will be resilient to the many users of the space. The finishes in the historic building do not always reflect this ability to stand up to the test of time, so there may need to be some flexibility with the materials used in the rehabilitation of 300 N Tioga, if this option is determined to be the required option.



CONCEPT 5

Build New Facility on the Site

This concept tests the possibility of utilizing the site by constructing a new building that maintains the setbacks on N Tioga and E Buffalo Streets of the older historic buildings – Boardman House and the Courthouse - and the building creates a significant setback from the east side of the Boardman House to reduce its uncomfortably close proximity to its neighbor to the east (where the current Building Annex C is located, and which is located directly on the property line).

The existing buildings would be deconstructed and a new building constructed utilizing a proportioning system and materials to relate to the historic buildings around it. At-grade parking would be placed on the site (see diagram above) and public green space would be provided at the front of the building on both N Tioga and E Buffalo Streets to relate to the site conditions found at the adjacent structures within the historic district.

It is important to note that this Concept's image (above) does not represent the specific design for the building, however, the image depicts the relative size and setback of the building compared to the other Concepts. If Concept 5 is chosen, a process for designing the building would include working closely with SHPO to determine appropriate design decisions regarding the specific massing, materials, setbacks, proportioning, and design details of the new structure. Materials from the deconstructed buildings would be offered for reuse and historic elements mutually determined appropriate for display could be mounted in the new facility.

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

The required departmental gross square footage identified by the County is 62,663 building gross square footage (bgsf). A new building that can accommodate the square footage required by the County would be 4 stories tall with a smaller fifth floor set back from the front of the building and has setbacks to match the adjacent historic buildings.

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

With the construction of the new building, there would be equity between departments, a priority for the County. The facility would be able to be designed to have comparable features in all departments.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

The building would be designed to accommodate flexible arrangements of departmental space that the County is seeking for the new facility.

Goal 4: Security

Security in the new building could be handled ideally with there being one single managed main entrance.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

Complying with NYS Building Code and Energy Code would not be challenging issues related to the design and construction of the new facility.

Goal 6: Meets County Capital Budget for the Project

Option 5				
New Building				
Building	BGSF	DGSF		Cost/SF
Deconstruction 3 buildings	29,396		\$881,880.00	\$30.00
New Building	62,663	48,202	\$31,331,500.00	\$500.00
SUB TOTAL	62,663	48,202	\$32,213,380.00	
Escalation to 2028			\$3,221,338.00	0.10
TOTAL			\$35,434,718.00	

The cost to construct a new facility is \$35,434,718.00 (including deconstruction), which is equal to the County's construction budget. It is \$11 million less than Concept 4, \$17 million less than Concept 3, and \$18 million less than Concept 2. The cost for construction (\$500/sf) is slightly less per square foot since there is not the structural cost of underpinning the historic structure(s) adjacent to the building (compared to \$540/sf for Concepts 2 and 3; and \$530/sf for Concept 4).

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

This is not an issue for this option, since the three buildings will be deconstructed and will not require foundations to be underpinned. Vibration will also not be a problem since it will be far enough away from other historic structures to not cause issues.

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

This concept, which allows the County to stay in Ithaca's downtown, which is really important to the economic vitality of Ithaca's historic infrastructure, allows the new facility to stay in downtown Ithaca.

Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements

Since the site, in this scenario, is not totally taken up by the new construction there is an opportunity to provide some surface parking spaces for visitors to the building and employees who have a frequent need for access to a vehicle. Therefore, underground parking will not need to be constructed.

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Maintaining the Center of Government in downtown Ithaca is crucial because it provides convenient access to services for both visitors and employees through buses, walking, and bicycling—modes of transportation that are highly valued by the County and its constituents. Downtown represents the largest concentration of residents in the County and ensures accessibility for people who do not have a vehicle. Moreover, a number of elderly residents who live downtown walk to their destinations, and many downtown residents choose not to own a vehicle in an effort to live more “green.” Preserving the facility’s downtown location is extremely important.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

Accessibility within and throughout the building would be straightforward and could involve a central elevator lobby and would not require extensive ramps to connect buildings.

Goal 12: Entrances

Entrance into a building on the site without the constraints of the three existing buildings would be straightforward and easy to resolve from a design perspective.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

A wayfinding system would be straightforward to implement.

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

An important criterion for the County is that the facility should be sustainable, especially considering that the goal is for the building to accommodate its needs for the next 100 years. With the design and construction of a new facility, sustainable practices can be integrated into the entire structure.

A geothermal HVAC system for the facility will be installed, The County is currently conducting a feasibility study to evaluate the possibility of a geothermal heating and cooling system for the County campus, which would include the new office space.

The County’s goal is to make this facility a LEED Gold project.

Goal 15: Natural Light

Natural light could be easily resolved with the design of a new building, and provide equitable lighting for each department.

Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

Concept 5 would deconstruct 300 N Tioga, Building Annex C and 308 N Tioga. The County’s other facilities in the historic district would be maintained and further work to renew and preserve the interior of the Old Jail and Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) would be undertaken subsequent to the completion of the new building project.

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

The need for square footage required for the new building means that the new structure, likely closer in height to a four/five-story building, would need to be constructed on the site. The new building would be similar in height to the other civic buildings in the historic district.

Across the street from the site at 200 E Buffalo Street, originally stood the YMCA Building that was constructed in 1907 and was part of the DeWitt Park Historic District. The building burned down in May of 1978, seven years after the creation of the historic district. This building stood 4.5 stories tall, which is similar to the height proposed for the new structure on the opposite corner.

We feel that four/five stories would not be an acceptable height for this building if it was placed next to the existing structure. An interesting note, however, is that across the street from the site at 200 E Buffalo Street, originally stood the YMCA Building that was constructed in 1907 and was part of the DeWitt Park Historic District. The building burned down in May of 1978, seven years after the creation of the historic district. This building stood 4.5 stories tall.



Across the street from the building site at 200 E Buffalo St was the YMCA Building which burned down 1978.

Below are other buildings in the DeWitt Park Historic District that illustrate the scale of some of the adjacent structures.



Images from left to right.
 Top row: Courthouse, Old Courthouse.
 Bottom Row: St. John's Episcopal Church, First Baptist Church, First Presbyterian Church.



Top: DeWitt Mall (Former DeWitt High School)
 Bottom: Old Jail



Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials and Aesthetics

A new building can be designed to relate to the proportioning system and materials of the Courthouse, Old Jail, Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse), the churches and Boardman House. A masonry exterior material choice is an appropriate choice that relates to the remaining historic buildings and the historic district in general.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

The County sees this project as one which needs to stand the test of time and that the materials utilized to be high quality finishes that will be resilient to the many users of the space.



CONCEPT 6

Build New Facility Outside of Downtown Ithaca

(Potentially Move Facilities to New Location)

This concept tests the possibility of moving to a new site outside of downtown Ithaca.

Tompkins County’s government offices are currently primarily located in downtown Ithaca along North Tioga Street, East Court Street, East Buffalo Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Street, and East Green Street. These offices are housed predominantly in historic structures, for which the County has demonstrated excellent stewardship for many years. The public-facing departments are strategically located in the County’s largest population center to ensure equitable access to services, and they serve as the office core for 461 employees—playing an integral role in downtown Ithaca’s vitality.

The County would like to remain in downtown Ithaca to bolster its economic vitality and secure its future. Additionally, Tompkins County believes that consolidating its services in one central location will eliminate the confusion caused by having departments scattered throughout the County and community. This centralization is expected to improve efficiency and enable the delivery of comprehensive services to County residents. After evaluating numerous options—including purchasing and selling alternative adjacent sites for this facility—the County has prioritized building on the DeWitt site as the most effective solution. If they are not able to build on the DeWitt Park site, then Concept 6 would be pursued.

This option moves the Center of Government out of Downtown Ithaca, not their goal, but an option that would provide a solution if they were not able to construct the building in downtown Ithaca.

Relocating services would make access difficult for the aging population and would not be convenient for the County’s population center. The objective of this project is to consolidate the County government in a location where the majority of County employees are already based—adjacent to the historic Courthouse, Old Jail, and Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse). Significant restoration has already been completed on many of these historic buildings, and they can continue to meet the County’s functional needs for years to come.

If the Center of Government is not built adjacent to these existing structures, the County may opt to construct a larger facility elsewhere to accommodate its entire workforce. This larger facility would be more costly, as it would need to include departments that were originally planned to remain in their historic locations. Moving the Center of Government out of downtown Ithaca would not only have a negative economic impact on downtown and the DeWitt Park Historic District—whose civic and municipal presence is vital to its culture and vitality—but would also adversely affect the historic buildings currently occupied by County employees, as these buildings would need to find a new purpose once vacated.

While the County could place these buildings on the market, their purpose-built nature and the projected costs of rehabilitation raise concerns that they may be prohibitively expensive for potential new owners to purchase and repurpose.

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

The required departmental gross square footage identified by the County is 48,202 dgsf which equals 62,663 building gross square footage (bgsf).

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

With the construction of a new building in a green field, there would be equity between departments, a priority for the County. The facility would be able to be designed to have comparable features in departments.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

The building would be designed to accommodate flexible arrangements of departmental space that the County is seeking for the new facility.

Goal 4: Security

Security in the new building could be handled ideally with there being one single managed main entrance.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

Complying with NYS Building Code and Energy Code would not be challenging issues related to the design and construction of the new facility.

Goal 6: Meets County Capital Budget for the Project

Option 6				
New Building				
Building	BGSF	DGSF		Cost/SF
Old Jail & Old Courthouse relocation	9000	6900	\$4,500,000.00	\$500.00
New Building	62,663	48,202	\$31,331,500.00	\$500.00
SUB TOTAL	71,663	48,202	\$35,831,500.00	
Escalation to 2028			\$3,583,150.00	0.10
TOTAL			\$39,414,650.00	

The cost to construct a new facility is \$39,414,650.00, which is \$4 million more than the County's budget and Concept 5. The cost for construction (\$500/sf) is less per square foot since there is not the structural cost of underpinning the historic structure(s) adjacent to the building (compared to \$540/sf for Concepts 2 and 3; and \$530/sf for Concept 4).

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

This is not an issue for this option, since the new building would not involve the rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

The County would move facilities for at least 171 employees, and may relocate more of their facilities to one location, resulting in more of their 461 employees departing from downtown Ithaca, significantly impacting downtown Ithaca's economic vitality. This may also impact the future of some of its currently occupied historic buildings, which would strike a blow to the historic infrastructure of Ithaca's downtown.

Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements

In this scenario, parking would not be an issue since the new site would be a “green field” somewhere which would have fewer parking restrictions than the downtown site. Underground parking would therefore not be needed, which also reduces construction cost.

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Locating in a “green field” would not achieve the goal of providing a facility which would be accessible by public transportation, be within walking distance for a large number of people nor would it be within biking distance for most people. This is an important goal that would not be met for this Concept.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

Accessibility within and throughout the building could be effectively designed into the design of the new building, and could involve a central elevator lobby and would not require extensive ramps to connect buildings.

Goal 12: Entrances

Entrance into a building on the site without the constraints of the three existing buildings could be effectively designed into the design of the new building, and easy to resolve from a design perspective.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

A wayfinding system could be effectively designed into the design of the new building.

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

An important criterion for the County is that the facility should be sustainable, especially considering that the goal is for the building to accommodate its needs for the next 100 years. With the design and construction of a new facility, sustainable practices can be integrated into the entire structure, which this option would provide. A geothermal system would be feasible and provide lower operational costs.

The County's goal is to make this facility a LEED Gold project, which is possible in this case.

Goal 15: Natural Light

Natural light could be easily provided with the design of a new building, creating equitable lighting for each department.



Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

Concept 6 would not accommodate the option of preserving the three buildings on the site that they currently own, as they would be put on the market. There is concern about their future due to the projected costs for rehabilitating the structures. The County would no longer control the future of these buildings. They will also need to determine if the new facility would include departments which currently reside in other buildings that they own which could result in leaving other historic buildings in downtown Ithaca.

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

This would no longer be an issue or a goal.

Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials and Aesthetics

The new building would not be designed to relate to the historic district in which they are currently located, as the structure would be located outside of Ithaca’s downtown.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

The County sees this project as one which needs to stand the test of time and that the materials utilized to be high quality finishes that will be resilient to the many users of the space.

COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

How the Existing Buildings Challenge the Overall Success of the Project:

The most challenging aspect of this project is that Tompkins County wants to maintain its important and significant presence in downtown Ithaca but needs to create additional space to adequately accommodate its employees and their functions while effectively serving the public. The County currently occupies several significant and historic facilities in downtown Ithaca (Courthouse, Old Jail, Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) and Annex Building C and the Tompkins Center for History and Culture) but they need to create space that can function together with their other facilities as a Center of Government complex to effectively and efficiently provide services for its residents. The County has been working together with its architects for several years to identify the space deficit and to plan for its needs for the next millennia – that is flexible, efficient, equitable, environmentally sound space that will stand the test of time over the coming decades. They have acquired and sold several buildings near their existing structures as they evaluated their options for creating the 48,202 + departmental gross square footage (which equals 62,663 bgsf) that they need to resolve this dilemma.

The County employs 461 people downtown, which is a very important part of Ithaca’s downtown economic vitality. The County recognizes that continuing their presence downtown is a fundamental priority for Ithaca’s prosperity, the future of other historic buildings and an important aspect of serving the residents of Tompkins County due to accessibility to the greatest concentration of its residents. As excellent stewards of some of Ithaca’s most important historic buildings, the County’s citizens and economy would be fortunate to continue to have them care for these buildings as they expand their need for space. Weighing this need against the potential loss of the buildings adjacent to the site is a difficult analysis, however, it is important to look at the overall benefits that might be risked in this scenario.

The three mid-century buildings provide 19,836 departmental gross square feet of space, creating a shortfall of 28,366 dgsf, requiring additional building space to be necessary on the site. The four Concepts for creating this space on the site (Concepts 2 - 5) are summarized in the previous sections of this report, however, as delineated in the summaries for each option, numerous deficiencies exist with each concept. The most significant issue is the cost associated with keeping the building(s), which range(s) from an additional \$11 million to \$18 million dollars when compared to constructing a new facility on the site – a vast amount especially considering the current limited opportunities to find grant money to help offset the costs for undertaking the project.

A total of 19 key issues identified as important to the County and its constituents were examined. Of the options evaluated only one, Concept 5, addressed the majority of these issues, meeting 18 out of 19 criteria. Below is a comparative analysis of these issues.

Measurable Goals	3 existing buildings remain	New building between 3 existing buildings	New “L-shaped” building between 3 existing buildings	New building plus rehabilitation of 300 N Tioga	All new building (deconstruction of 3 buildings)	New building out of city (sell 3 existing buildings)
Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Efficiency of meeting department SF requirements	29k	103k	101k	86k	63k	72k
Departmental Equity and Quality of Space	N/A					
Flexibility to accommodate change over time	N/A					
Security	N/A					
NYS Building Code	N/A					
Meets County capital budget for the project	N/A	\$53m	\$52m	\$46m	\$35m	\$39m
Structural challenges of building around historic building	N/A					
Maintains and enhances downtown economic vitality	N/A					
Meets parking needs and requirements	N/A					
Access to public transportation, walking & biking	N/A					
ADA compliance	N/A					
Entrances	N/A					
Wayfinding	N/A					
Sustainability and Energy Code	N/A					
Natural light	N/A					
Preserves contributing buildings to the Historic District	N/A					
Conforms to historic district massing	N/A					
Conforms to Historic District Building Materials / Aesthetics	N/A					
Longevity Finishes and Materials	N/A					

Goal 1: Efficiency of Meeting Department Square Foot Requirements

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Efficiency of meeting department SF requirements	29k	103k	101k	86k	63k	72k

Fitting the Facilities on the Site and how the Options Compare and Setbacks:

Concept 1 looked at revitalizing the three existing buildings (300 N Tioga, 308 N Tioga and 128 E Buffalo Streets) which have a total square footage of 19,836 dgsf. **This leaves a shortfall of 28,366 dgsf** compared to the needed 48,202 dgsf (62,663 bgsf). The County currently owns, occupies and proudly maintains other historic properties adjacent to the site and the County’s goal is to build a facility next to its historic campus in order to have a centralized facility for staff and residents to efficiently utilize in downtown Ithaca.

Concepts 2 & 3 involve maintaining all three existing buildings (300 N Tioga, 308 N Tioga and 128 E Buffalo Street), while building a new infill building between the existing structures. The site is taken up by all four structures, with parking beneath. A twelve foot atrium space is proposed to be constructed around each building to provide limited natural light. Concepts 2 and 3 do not create efficient space that meet the County’s requirements due to the extraneous non-departmental atrium space needed to enable natural lighting of the new and existing buildings.

Keeping the three mid-century structures and incorporating them into a new facility is difficult due to numerous factors (see below), but their sizes restrict how the site can be functionally and aesthetically utilized. Such a solution is not an acceptable option for the County.

Concept 4 incorporates the former bank building at the corner (300 N Tioga St) as the entrance to the facility, with 308 N Tioga and Building Annex C (128 E Buffalo St) being deconstructed. The new building would be set back from the east side of Boardman House but the front of the building on Tioga and Buffalo Streets would be aligned with the corner building at 300 N Tioga, with no setback from the street due to the necessary square footage needed for the new building. This Concept provides more efficient use of space than Concepts 2 and 3.

Concept 5 involves the deconstruction of all three historic buildings with a new facility built on the site, but set back from the east side of Boardman House, as well as grassy setbacks on E Buffalo and N Tioga that align with the Boardman House and the Courthouse. Historic elements from the deconstructed buildings are proposed to be installed in the new structure. This would be an efficient use of space for the proposed facility.

Concept 6 involves building the facility away from Ithaca’s downtown, and may include abandoning some historic buildings which they currently utilize and proudly maintain – the Courthouse, Old Jail, Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) and the Annex Building C at 128 E Buffalo St. This option would provide an efficient use of space in the new facility.

Goal 2: Departmental Equity and Quality of Space

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Departmental Equity and Quality of Space	N/A					

The County has passed legislation requiring that their employees occupy space that has departmental equity, which is also a requirement for the Center of Government project. This will be very difficult to accomplish with the construction of a new building between and including the three rehabilitated historic buildings (Concepts 2 or 3), since equitable access to natural light, finish materials and size of space (which is dictated by each building and how departments fit into those spaces) all contribute to departmental equity. Concepts 4, 5 and 6 all support desired equity and quality of space.

Goal 3: Flexibility to Accommodate Change Over Time

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Flexibility to accommodate change over time	N/A					

Concepts 4-6 provide flexibility for future growth and change over time, due to the flexible design solutions that can be incorporated into new and larger space. The rehabilitation of the existing buildings in Concepts 2 and 3 challenge flexibility goals since their floor plans and structural systems restrict the ability to grow and shrink due to their space being so limited.

Goal 4: Security

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Security	N/A					

Concepts 2 and 3 create a challenge to efficiently and safely provide security for the facilities since they would require four different entrances or a very complicated entry sequence to gain entry to a desired department. Operating four entrances is not a sustainable practice when you consider the labor that necessary to manage these entrances as well as the confusing access this creates for users of the building. Concepts 4-6 provide an efficient solution for security.

Goal 5: New York State Building Code

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
NYS Building Code	N/A					

The main New York State Building Code issue for this project relates to the fact that in January 2026, historic buildings will be required to comply with the Energy Code (over the past few decades, this was not a requirement). It is not clear how 300 N Tioga will comply with the Energy Code due to the glass that makes up the glazing system’s exterior. IF new insulated glass can be substituted for this building, it will be an extremely expensive retrofit. The historic integrity of all three historic buildings will be impacted by this requirement.

Goal 6: Meets County Capital Budget for the Project

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Meets County capital budget for the project	N/A	\$53m	\$52m	\$46m	\$35m	\$39m

- The estimated cost for Concept 2 is **\$53,199,929.20** (keeping all three historic buildings).
- The estimated cost for Concept 3 is **\$52,244,777.20** (keeping all three historic buildings).
- The estimated cost for Concept 4 is **\$46,446,782,80** (keeping one historic building).
- The estimated cost for Concept 5 is **\$35,434,718.00** (deconstruction and a new building).
- The estimated cost for Concept 6 is **\$39,414,650.00** (building a new facility in a green field outside of downtown Ithaca).

The County’s budget for this project is \$35 million. With the exception of Concept 5, Concepts 2, 3, 4 and 6 are beyond the County’s budget and **the difference in cost between the downtown solutions vary from \$11 million to \$18 million more than the County’s budget and in comparison to building a new facility on the site.** This is a vast amount, especially considering the current limited opportunities to find grant money to help offset the costs for undertaking the project.

Goal 7: Structural Challenge of Building Around Historic Buildings

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Structural challenges of building around historic building	N/A					

Constructing a new building between the existing structures poses a challenging dilemma since the foundation walls of the existing buildings are so close or even adjacent to the new foundations. Existing foundation walls would need to be underpinned, a costly and difficult process, and the vibration from excavation would have a detrimental effect on the rehabilitation of the existing buildings. Where sub-surface parking is required, this would exacerbate the problem. Concepts 5 and 6 do not have the structural challenges that Concepts 2, 3 and 4 have, which are costly and challenging.

Goal 8: Maintains and Enhances Downtown Economic Vitality

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Maintains and enhances downtown economic vitality	N/A					

Maintaining the County’s facilities in downtown Ithaca is a VERY important goal for the County, since 461 employees work in the downtown and 171 employees would be located in the Center of Government. The economic vitality represented by the County’s presence downtown cannot be overstated, as this loss of employees would have a tremendous impact on businesses located here. Concepts 2, 3, 4 and 5 all preserve the economic vitality that currently exists in downtown Ithaca.

Goal 9: Parking Needs and Requirements

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Meets parking needs and requirements	N/A					

The site does not have the ability to provide surface parking for the complex in Concepts 2, 3 and 4 for the necessary parking adjacent to the building and especially not ideally located near the building entrance(s). Concepts 2, 3 and 4 each require that one or two subterranean parking level(s) be constructed (an additional \$4.7 to \$9.4 million cost) in order to provide access to visitors to the building and for a small number of employees that come and go throughout the day.

Goal 10: Access to Public Transportation and Pedestrian/Bicycle Access

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Access to public transportation, walking & biking	N/A					

Concepts 1-5 each provide access to public transportation, and are accessible to pedestrians and by bicycle, all important features of the project if it is being maintained downtown. Being accessible is important since a majority of the County’s residents are based in a population centered in downtown Ithaca. Concept 6 does not meet the goal of being accessible to public transportation, pedestrian or bicycle access.

Goal 11: ADA Compliance

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
ADA compliance	N/A					

It is very important to the success of this project that the facility is fully accessible to the public, including the elderly and disabled. The varying first and second floor heights of each building make it difficult to provide this accessibility in Concepts 2 and 3 since each building would have to have its own elevator and circulation system, and door widths and bathrooms in each building will need to be adjusted to meet these requirements. Also, a complex ramping system between buildings in Concepts 2 and 3 will need to be developed to provide this access throughout the complex, which complicates the wayfinding system. Concepts 4, 5 and 6 enable ADA compliance to more readily be incorporated.

Goal 12: Entrances

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Entrances	N/A					

In Concepts 2 and 3, there is a major concern about how the public would enter the complex, since it would require that each building has its own entrance and security system. This would make it difficult to operate from a security perspective, and would be confusing to the public. The County wants to provide a clear, efficient and functional system for access to the building by the public, and having multiple entrances also requires significantly more personnel, which is an ongoing additional expense.

For Concept 4, entrance to the facility would be at the corner through 300 N Tioga. Since the building is not large enough to accommodate a single department, a good use for the space would be as public meeting rooms upstairs, and reception space on the first floor. Parking, however, would not be convenient for this corner entrance. Concepts 5 and 6 can be designed to provide one clear public entrance.

Goal 13: Wayfinding

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Wayfinding	N/A					

In Concepts 2 and 3, wayfinding in and throughout the facility would be extremely confusing, since each structure would not be tied into a single circulation system, each building would have its own function and method of access, and departments would be independent of the other departments and buildings. This would be a very confusing solution for visitors to the building in Concepts 2 and 3. Concepts 4, 5 and 6 could have much clearer wayfinding systems.

Goal 14: Sustainability and Energy Code Compliance

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Sustainability and Energy Code	N/A					

The County expects that their facilities should be sustainable and efficient. Building code will require the buildings to meet the energy code. This is feasible with the construction of the new building; however, this is a challenge for the three existing historic buildings in Concepts 2, 3 and 4. In January 2026, building code revisions have been approved that will require historic buildings to meet energy code. This will be extremely difficult and expensive, if not impossible to meet with the 300 N Tioga due to the single pane large scale glass panels that exist in the building. It has not been determined if a suitably sized insulated glass panel can be fabricated to fit the size of the panels required. Meeting energy code will have an impact on the historic integrity of all three buildings, but especially 300 N Tioga, if it can be met.

Goal 15: Natural Light

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Natural light	N/A					

Inadequate space exists between the three mid-century modern buildings to be able to build a structure which provides sufficient fenestration for ample natural light for the new and existing buildings. Natural light is limited within 308 N Tioga and Building Annex C/128 E Buffalo St by virtue of the design of each of the buildings. Natural light is a character defining feature of 300 N Tioga Street, which would be important to maintain. Concepts 2 and 3 present a challenge for creating sufficient natural light. Concept 4 is slightly impacted. Concepts 5 and 6 would allow for ample natural lighting.

Goal 16: Preserves Historic Buildings in Historic District

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Preserves contributing buildings to the Historic District	N/A					

Concepts 2, 3 and 4 preserve one or three of the mid-century modern historic buildings on the site. Options 5 and 6 do not preserve the three buildings on the site, however, **Concept 5 preserves the historic buildings owned by the County which are adjacent to the site** – the Courthouse, the Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) and the Old Jail. It is not clear whether Concept 6, building out of the downtown, will conserve the existing historic buildings adjacent to the site which are owned and occupied by the County, since they may choose to relocate some of the departments from these buildings to the new location.

Goal 17: Conformity to Historic District Massing

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Conforms to historic district massing	N/A					

The height and massing of the new structure in Concepts 2 and 3, as it relates to the existing two-story historic buildings would be significantly different from the two-story buildings (five to six stories in height) and would detract from their historic integrity. A study was undertaken to look at adding height to the existing buildings (which we recognize is not a solution that maintains historic integrity), and it was determined that adding height to the existing buildings was not an option structurally.

A structure of four to five stories in height in Concepts 4 and 5 relates to the older historic buildings on the site and compares to the old YMCA building which once stood opposite the proposed building on Buffalo Street (but burned down in 1978), however, next to the two stories of 300 N Tioga, in Concept 4, it is out of scale.

Goal 18: Conforms to Historic District Building Materials & Aesthetics

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Conforms to Historic District Building Materials / Aesthetics	N/A					

The exterior materials on each of the three historic buildings and those of the Courthouse, Old Jail and Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse) are all different from each other, making a unifying building’s choice of materials quite challenging, especially in Concepts 2, 3 and 4 where there are more materials and proportioning to relate to. Materials range from darkened glass and steel; to buff colored brick and a decorative steel circular grid; to red brick with inset creme colored panels; to gray colored stone; to brick and stone/limestone. What to use as a unifying material would be challenging. Concept 5, could relate to the masonry buildings adjacent to the site.

In an effort to provide the space needed by the County in Concepts 2 and 3, which maintains the three mid-century modern buildings, the solution compromises the historic integrity of the existing buildings, it demands a design aesthetic that cannot relate to all of the buildings, and results in a building which is not functionally sound. Concept 4 has fewer conflicts, but Concept 5 allows for a solution that can relate far better to the historic materials and aesthetics of the adjacent historic buildings.

Goal 19: Longevity of Materials

Concept #:	1	2	3	4	5	6
Longevity Finishes and Materials	N/A					

The new building will be required to incorporate materials that will be long-lasting which will be resilient and stand up to the use it will get over decades. The rehabilitation of the existing buildings in Concepts 2, 3 and 4 would incorporate materials similar to their original construction and would not necessarily reflect the durability important to the County.

IN CONCLUSION

Tompkins County has long occupied and maintained its historic buildings, as demonstrated by the ongoing care of the Courthouse, the Daniel D. Tompkins Building (Old Courthouse), and the Old Jail, and others, which have served as County facilities for many years. The County understands the importance of maintaining its presence in downtown Ithaca to help sustain the area's economic vitality. They also recognize the significance of providing services in a location that is not only centralized and easily accessible to the county's largest concentration of residents, but also to those who rely on walking or cycling due to lack of car access. Furthermore, the County aspires to provide efficient and sustainable spaces for both visitors and employees.

Over the years, the County has explored numerous options for accommodating the additional space that it has needed for decades. It was clear that unless they could find a way to efficiently provide services incorporating their existing buildings, the solution was not viable. It was determined that constructing a new facility adjacent to their current historic building campus would be the best way to provide services efficiently and sustainably while supporting the vitality of downtown Ithaca.

Initially, when evaluating the three buildings included in this study, the County used the CRIS system, which did not indicate that these buildings were contributing structures to the DeWitt Park Historic District or part of a local historic district. Based on this, they did not foresee any issues with deconstructing the buildings. However, upon consultation with SHPO, the County first learned that the buildings were added to the National Historic District many years after the original district's establishment. This discovery shifted the direction of the project, leading the County to explore options that included maintaining all three buildings, as well as an option for retaining only one of the three structures (300 N Tioga).

A considerable amount of effort was devoted to evaluating the options, including detailed cost analyses and a thoughtful evaluation of 19 goals as they pertained to six concepts for the site. After much study, the County has concluded that the best course of action is to deconstruct all three mid-century buildings and construct a new facility that is appropriate in terms of height, setback, materials, and location. While this decision is not ideal from every perspective, the County believes that, given the importance of keeping its 461 employees in downtown Ithaca and revitalizing its other historic buildings, Option 5—constructing a new building—is the right solution.

As a preservation architect devoted to the preservation of downtowns and historic preservation for over 40 years, it has been a very thought-provoking journey for me as the county's preservation consultant to help guide this exploration. The most compelling aspect of this project to me is the importance of keeping the County in downtown Ithaca, where they will continue to be stewards of their numerous historic buildings, where the public will continue to utilize the County's services in downtown Ithaca and where they would like to plan their future for the next 100 years. While it would be disappointing to lose these three mid-century modern buildings, it would be devastating to lose the County's historic infrastructure and presence if they are unable to grow in their current location where downtown Ithaca's economic vitality is dependent on their presence.