

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

# 2040

# Long Range Transportation Plan



## LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

Ten years ago, in 2009, the then newly approved 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan included a preamble titled: Climate Change and Energy Position Statement. Although the concern with peak oil, prevalent a decade ago, has been postponed by the fracking revolution, the concerns related to climate change have only intensified. Today it can be argued that the best use for oil and gas fossil fuels is to remain in the ground serving their natural timeless roles as coal sinks. However, the transportation sector in the United States continues to be heavily dependent on liquid fossil fuels, primarily gasoline and diesel.

The 2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan was developed with a conscious recognition of the importance of the transportation sector in any effort to reduce carbon emissions. On November 2007, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) made it clear that “warming of the climate system is unequivocal” and “most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations.” More recently, chapter two of the October 2018 IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C includes a series of transportation strategies and recommendations that are essential to meet carbon emission goals. It states that “a 1.5°C pathway for the transport sector is possible using a mix of additional and stringent policy actions preventing (or reducing) the need for transport, encouraging shifts towards efficient modes of transport, and improving vehicle-fuel efficiency.” It’s gratifying to know that the ITCTC’s Long-Range Transportation Plan has been supportive of this approach for the last 20 years.

As an important contributor to planning efforts for the Ithaca Urbanized Area and Tompkins County, the ITCTC’s role is one of cooperation, support and serving as a catalyst for transportation programs and projects. In such a role, the ITCTC will help maintain an ethic and awareness of the climate change impacts of transportation policy and of other policies that directly and indirectly affect the way our residents travel. The ITCTC will continue to work with local leadership to generate community involvement in planning for a more sustainable future.

The ITCTC will operate through its required core planning documents, the 20-year Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), to promote goals that help address the challenges of climate change, while seeking to enhance the quality of life of all residents. The LRTP goals embrace the concept of Sustainable Accessibility, which reflects the community’s vision of transportation as a truly integrated multimodal system that recognizes the combined role of proximity of land uses, connectivity, mobility and its interaction with our environment and our quality of life.

The challenges of providing effective transportation while minimizing carbon emissions have the potential to fundamentally change the ways in which we all live and work. As such, they will require a new way of thinking about local and regional planning and cooperation. Transportation planning policies, programs and projects must adapt to meet new demands under potentially different climatic and energy conditions. Although such change is often spoken about negatively, it is wrong to assume that the future is bleak—this is also a time of opportunity for Tompkins County. Many of the measures required to meet the challenges we face will serve to actually improve the way we live, the way we travel, and the way we interact within our communities. ITCTC representatives and staff, as members of the community, will work to find those solutions in transportation that result in sustainable improvements to the quality of life of Tompkins County residents.

Sincerely,



**Bill Goodman**  
Chair, Policy Committee  
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council



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