

# Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board

Wednesday January 20, 2016; 3:00pm – 4:15 pm

CVB, 904 East Shore Drive, Ithaca

AGENDA	Start Time
1. Nominating Committee – Sue Perlgut	3:00
o Vote to elect 2016 STPB Officers; Nominating Committee’s slate is Anne Gossen – Chair, Christy Agnese – Vice-Chair	
2. December STPB Meeting Minutes	
o ACTION – Approve Meeting Minutes	
3. Privilege of the Floor	3:10
o Limit of 3 minutes per person for members of the public to address the board	
4. Chair’s REPORT – Anne Gossen	3:15
• 2016 Draft Committee Assignments	
• Conflict of Interest Policy	
• STPB Member Roles and Responsibilities	
5. Staff REPORT – Tom Knipe	3:30
• STPB Member FTP site – to access board documents	
• 2016 Staff Work Plan – Feedback invited	
6. CVB / Chamber Monthly REPORT –Jennifer Tavares	3:35
7. STPB Member Goals for 2016 – SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION	3:45
	END 4:15

## Agenda Packet

1. December 2015 draft STPB meeting minutes
2. 2015 STPB Committee Year-End Summary Reports
3. 2016 STPB Committee Assignments – Draft
4. STPB Conflict of Interest Policy and Form
5. STPB Member Roles & Responsibilities
6. 2016 Draft Staff Work Plan on Tourism – Tompkins County Planning Department
7. 2015 STPB Goals



MISSION: The Strategic Tourism Planning Board is charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for tourism initiatives that *promote economic development* and *enhance the quality of life* in Tompkins County.

1 **Date:** December 16, 2015  
 2 **Time:** 4:30-5:00pm  
 3 **Location:** Coltivare  
 4  
 5

**Attendees:**

Name	✓	Representation	Name	✓	Representation
Anne Kellerman	✓	At-Large	Christy Agnese	E	Ithaca College
Ian Golden	✓	Recreation	Sue Perlgut	✓	Arts-Culture
Ethan Ash	✓	Arts-Culture	Josh Friedman	✓	Arts-Culture
John Gutenberger	A	Cornell	John Spence	✓	CAP, Non-Voting
Lynnette Scofield	E	Lodging	Bruce Stoff	✓	CVB, Non-Voting
Kelli Cartmill	✓	Lodging	Dwight Mengel	A	Transportation, Non-Voting
Rita Rosenberg	✓	Agriculture	Gary Ferguson	✓	DIA, Non-Voting
David Blake	✓	At-Large	Jennifer Tavares	✓	Chamber, Non-Voting
Andy Zepp	E	At-Large	Martha Armstrong	✓	TCAD, Non-Voting
Stephen Nunley	✓	At-Large	Will Burbank	✓	TC Legislature, Non-Voting
Steve Hugo	E	At-Large	Beverly Baker		Associate Member
Ken Jupiter	✓	At-Large	Carol Kammen		Associate Member
Mike Mellor	✓	At-Large	Jon Reis	✓	Associate Member
Anne Gossen	✓	Arts-Culture	Tom Knipe	✓	Staff
Sue Stafford	✓	TC3	Jennifer Turner	✓	Staff

7

8 **Also in attendance:** Kristy Mitchell, Jodi LaPierre, Sarah Imes, Mary Rachun; Ithaca CVB, Nagiane Lacka  
 9 Arriaza, GIAC

10 **Meeting Agenda**

- 11 1) November STPB Meeting Minutes  
 12 2) Privilege of the Floor  
 13 3) Chair's Report – Sue Perlgut  
 14 5) Staff Report – Tom Knipe  
 15 6) CVB/Chamber Report – Bruce Stoff and Jennifer Tavares  
 16 7) STPB End of the Year Round Up and Look Forward  
 17

18 **The meeting was called to order** at 4:30 PM.

19 **November 2015 STPB meeting minutes were approved** with no changes.

20  
 21 **Chair's Report** – Sue Perlgut opened her report by thanking the Strategic Tourism Planning Board for their  
 22 amazing work. She went on to praise Bruce Stoff for his work with the board, and went on to thank and  
 23 congratulate Anne Gossen for taking over as Chair in 2016.  
 24

25 Anne Gossen provided a brief speech, praising Sue Perlgut's work as Chair of the Board, noting her efforts  
 26 in creating a branding strategy, and leadership qualities.  
 27

28  
 29 **Staff Report** – Tom Knipe reported that the Tourism Partner Awards were presented to the Legislature last  
 30 night, and went on to thank Mary Rachun, and Bruce Stoff for assisting with the presentation in his  
 31 absence. The Legislature also passed a resolution granting Strategic Tourism Implementation funding for  
 32 the Visitor Profile Study. Because the CFA for Wayfinding was not funded, STI funding for wayfinding will  
 33 be taken up by the legislature at a later date. The room tax law amendment was discussed by the  
 34 Legislature, and a public hearing is scheduled for January 19. By a vote of 9-5, the legislature voted against  
 35 a proposed revision to create threshold of 3 night stays in the room tax law's definition of a hotel The  
 36 Blueway Trail CFA was awarded; first steps include design, logos, signage and website design, and  
 37 organization of matching funds. The USDA grant workshop and training will take place at Coltivare in early  
 38 to mid-March with plans for over 100 farmers to receive information on how to expand their Agritourism  
 39 efforts. The Beautification planning efforts are underway, and will likely be presented to the Board in  
 40

41 January. CAP will be announcing the Public Art Grant Program that will utilize funding from the reserve fund  
42 with the Chamber of Commerce and will be matched by a private organization to roll out a pilot program;  
43 applications are due February 16. Comments on the Heritage Tourism Implementation Plan are due  
44 tomorrow. Tom discussed the Outdoor Recreation Committee, noting the six month planning effort will start  
45 January 2016, and asked interested members to contact Andy Zepp or Ian Golden. A draft staff work plan  
46 will be brought to members of the Board in January. Sue Perlgut reminded members to fill out the end of  
47 year committee survey.  
48

49 **CVB/Chamber Report** – Bruce Stoff reported that a lease renewal for the downtown visitor’s center space has  
50 been negotiated and that the lease will be in place for another year. REDC (Regional Economic Development  
51 Council) funding for the visitor tech initiative was not awarded; their team plans to work on alternate funding  
52 sources. A presentation will be given to the board next month on the technology involved. Bruce went on to thank  
53 Tom Knipe and Jennifer Tavares for their efforts with the CVB contract that has been approved for three additional  
54 years.  
55

56 **STPB End of Year RoundUp** – Tom Knipe invited members to revisit the 2015 goals included in the agenda  
57 packet in order to determine STPB goals for 2016. Sue gave a special thanks to Tom Knipe and Jennifer Turner for  
58 their support and to the Board for their exceptional work.  
59

60 With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00pm.  
61

62  
63 Respectfully Submitted,  
64 Jennifer Turner, Administrative Assistant  
65 Tompkins County Planning Department  
66

67 **Next Meeting Scheduled**  
68 Wednesday January 20, 2016  
69  
70

## **STPB Committees and Associated Advisory Committees 2015 Year End Summary Reports**

*Reports are organized by: Standing Committees of the STPB, Grant Review Committees, Ad-Hoc Committees of the STPB, and Advisory Committees*

### **Standing Committees**

#### **STPB Planning and Evaluation Committee**

The Planning and Evaluation Committee has made great progress in 2015. The highlights include the following work:

- Established new thresholds for more thorough review of grant recipients.
- Heritage Tourism Implementation Plan completed.
- Agriculinary Tourism Plan – significantly completed.
- Completed a more reliable framework for evaluation of CVB performance.
- Formed a committee for Outdoor Recreation Tourism Implementation Plan.
- Set aside strategic planning work related to Sustainability and Sports Tourism for the time being.

The biggest piece of work on the agenda for 2016 is the establishment of a Higher Education Tourism Committee.

#### **STPB Budget Committee**

The budget process worked smoothly again. The committee has expressed interest in exploring a slightly different approach in 2016, which would require beginning to meet earlier in the year next year.

#### **STPB Membership & Bylaws Committee**

The services of this committee were not required in 2015, as there was no turnover in board membership this year. Next year, the committee may wish to take up possible approaches to addressing one of the goals for the board, specifically to “develop a concerted approach to enhancing the demographic diversity of the STPB and associate membership”.

### **Grant Review Committees**

#### **ACOD Grant Review Committee**

Based on the work of the Program Taskforce the ACOD Guidelines were updated and invitations to submit applications were sent out to a number of new and previously funded arts and culture organizations. (2015 Action Oriented Goal completed) The application process has been divided into two parts, the first establishing eligibility so organizations who do not meet the minimum requirements are not asked to expend the significant effort required to complete a full application. Those organizations who have been deemed eligible have been informed and invited to complete a full application for funding by January 15, 2016. First time applicants will be considered for a one year contract. Veteran organizations can apply for tow year contracts. As of the second week in December it appears that seven returning organizations will submit applications in January, with three first-time applicants.

#### **Tourism Capital Grant Review Committee**

In 2015, the Tourism Capital Grants Program awarded a total of \$136,000 to six projects having a total value of \$829,000. Two projects are studies and four are significant capital investments. Over the next

few months Martha Armstrong will work with Tom Knipe to revise the application process – streamlining some of the questions while converting to the online format hosted by United Way.

### **Tourism Grant Review Committee**

This year, review of grant requests in three different categories – Tourism Projects Grants, New Tourism Initiatives, and Tourism Marketing and Advertising - was done by one combined committee. This proved to be effective at enhancing coordination of investments decisions across the different funds. It also created an additional burden for members of this grant review team to read and score a large number of applications. The Apricot online grant management system worked well for the second year. One additional area that may be explored in 2016 is having grant recipients complete reports through the Apricot portal, which will allow for more seamless interpretation of results and evaluation of past individual grant investments. One expected change in 2016 will be to have the grant administrator provide a score and comment on past performance, as part of the review process; this was a recommendation of P&E.

### **Community Celebrations Grant Review Committee**

28 Community Celebrations grant awards were made to 28 applicants in 2015, with an average award of \$1,162. Several changes of note were made this year: 1) the grant process was hosted online on the Apricot platform for the first time 2) the Committee membership was modified for the fall 2015 round in an effort to support diversity goals, and 3) changes in contracting requirements were made to allow the program to contract directly with eligible not-for-profit organizations in addition to continuing the practice of partnering directly with municipalities.

### **Ad-Hoc Committees**

#### **Heritage Tourism Task Force**

The Heritage Task Force began with best practice research, a modified SWOT analysis of county heritage tourism assets, and identification of themes. They then completed a draft for Tompkins County's first Heritage Tourism Plan. The task force sought feedback through targeted public comment, the County Planning Department, the Tourism Board and other organizations. In 2016, the task force will evaluate the comments received and finalize the plan. The task force will dissolve in 2016 once the plan has been adopted, with a new Heritage Tourism Network network group to carry on under The History Center's leadership.

#### **Agriculinary Tourism Task Force**

A major achievement of the committee in 2016 was supporting the Planning Department in applying for and receiving a \$50,000 grant from the USDA Farmers Market Promotion Program for local Agritourism Development and Promotion. The project will include tourism readiness assessments for 40 farms, agritourism training for farmers, package development including an open farm weekend and farm trail, and marketing including improvements to IthacaFork.com. Significant progress was towards the completion of an implementation plan made in the past year plus as well. The task force organized a community input event, gathering ideas from over 100 stakeholders in the farming, culinary, and winery/brewery market. The ideas were distilled into categories and priorities for consideration in the agritourism implementation plan. A draft plan is expected to be ready for review in early 2016.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Tourism Task Force**

Preliminary groundwork for this committee was laid in 2015 with a charge being created with support of the P&E Committee and Andy Zepp and Ian Golden agreeing to co-chair. A kick-off meeting of the new task force will be held in mid-January 2016 and work on an Outdoor Recreation Tourism Implementation

Plan (in a similar vein as previous work on Agriculinary Tourism and Heritage Tourism) will proceed over 6+ months in the first part of 2016.

#### **Meeting Facility Ad-Hoc Committee**

The ad hoc meeting facility group met once to consider whether there were appropriate actions that the STPB might take to support efforts to expand meeting facilities within the county. It was agreed that the group should monitor discussions underway between several developers and the City of Ithaca and allow them to proceed before considering further. A follow up meeting is anticipated during the first quarter of 2016.

#### **ACOD Special Program Review Committee**

All organizations that were being funded through the Arts and Culture Organizational Development (ACOD) program would see their multi-year contracts wrap up at the end of 2015. Before opening a new round of applications and grants, it was felt that it was a good time to review the ACOD program, its purposes, and guidelines. A special taskforce was convened in the fall of 2014 to look at, among other things, organizational eligibility requirements for funding, and whether new organizations might be encouraged to apply for funding starting in 2016. The taskforce presented it work to the STPB in April of 2015. The original definition of arts and cultural organizations was reaffirmed. There were minor adjustments to the program guidelines and the eligibility requirements, and it was agreed to encourage new organizations to apply for funding.

#### **Branding and Communications Ad-Hoc Committee**

This ad-hoc committee completed a draft brand statement for the Tompkins County Tourism Program in fall 2015 with the support of consultant Marcia Nedland. The next step will be to craft a formal communications strategy for the program, which is expected to take place in the first half of 2016.

#### **Visitor Profile Study Steering Committee**

This Ad-Hoc Committee was brought together by the CVB in spring 2015 to consider the process for hiring a consultant to conduct a new visitor profile study. An RFP was completed and distributed in November, and the committee will reconvene again in early 2016 to review proposals. The contract with the consultant will be administered through the Chamber/CVB and a consultant is expected to be hired by March or April 2016. The committee will be invited to provide input on study design, methodology, etc and will help steer the project until its completion in 2017.

#### **Advisory Committees**

##### **Festivals Program Advisory Committee**

The County Festivals Program has been set up to assist and support special events throughout the County, especially those events who are applicants and/or recipients of Room Tax dollars. In 2015, the Program focused on an in-depth two workshop series designed to provide detailed information for event planners. The DIA provided direct assistance to a large number of grant recipients, applicants, and other groups/individuals. This assistance ranged from permitting advice to marketing and fiscal planning. The program's most popular element has been its lending library of equipment for events. Scores of events saved significant dollars by borrowing equipment such as pop-up tents, stanchions, tables and chairs, and other staple items that are part of any event. Perhaps most gratifying was we finally were able to convene a County Festival Advisory Committee charged with providing guidance and input to the program. Looking to 2016, we see this committee meeting quarterly to help shape guidelines for how to best distribute and allocate scarce technical assistance resources to a growing community of festival and events.

**Beautification, Public Art & Signage Advisory Committee**

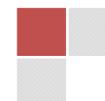
In addition to ongoing work to provide guidance to the service provided through this program by the Chamber, CCETC and DIA, the committee is nearing completion on an implementation plan for Beautification, Signage and Public Art which will be presented to the STPB in early 2016. The Chamber made significant progress towards developing an implementation strategy for the Wayfinding initiative, including securing financial commitments from a number of local partners and applying for state funding through the 2015 CFA round; this work is expected to continue in 2016. In addition, the Chamber and County Planning Department worked with CAP to develop a pilot public art grant program, deploying \$4,000 in public art funding that was in a reserve balance at the Chamber. An announcement from CAP is forthcoming.

**Marketing Advisory Committee**

The CVB convened this advisory committee twice in 2015: once in the spring to solicit input on the proposed rebranding of VisitIthaca.com and again to solicit input on possible upgrades to the events website/calendar functions for IthacaEvents.com and VisitIthaca.com.

**STPB Committee Assignments 2016 - Draft – 1/12/16**

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Members by appointment</b>	<b>Admin</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Committee Members</b>
Executive	As needed	Former Chairs and Vice Chairs, Budget Chair and Current Chair and Vice Chair		Anne Gossen	Christy Agnese, Sue Perlgut
Nominating Committee	As needed	Elected by members			
<b>Standing Committees</b>					
Budget 4 Voting members required		Chair, Vice Chair	Tom Knipe	Christy Agnese	Stephen Nunley, Sue Perlgut, Sue Stafford, Anne Gossen
Membership & By-Laws 3 Voting members required	As needed		Tom Knipe	Lynnette Scofield	Sue Perlgut, John Gutenberger, Anne Kellerman, David Blake
Planning & Evaluation	Monthly or every other month		Tom Knipe	Ken Jupiter	Anne Kellerman, Mike Mellor, Gary Ferguson, Jennifer Tavares, Martha Armstrong, Josh Friedman, John Spence, Christy Agnese
<b>Grant Review Committees (2 voting members required)</b>					
Combined Tourism Grant Review (Tourism Projects, New Tourism Initiatives, and Tourism Marketing and Advertising Grants)	March, November (if needed)		Tom Knipe, CVB Staff (Tech Assistance)	Mike Mellor	Jon Reis, Lynnette Scofield, Stephen Nunley, Anne Kellerman, Kelli Cartmill, David Blake, Steve Hugo
Community Celebrations	March, November		Tom Knipe	Carol Kammen	Sue Perlgut, Mike Lane, David Blake, Nagiane Lacka, Carole Schiffman
Arts and Culture Organizational Development Grant	March	Arts & Culture STPB reps	John Spence	?	Ethan Ash, Anne Gossen, Leslie Ackerman, Anne Kellerman, Will Burbank, Mike Mellor



Tourism Capital Grant	April		Martha Armstrong	?	Steve Hugo, Ken Jupiter, Kelli Cartmill, others as appointed by TCAD
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Committee	Meetings	Members by appointment	Admin	Chair	Members
<b>Ad Hoc Committees</b>					
Heritage Tourism Task Force	ending 2016		Tom Knipe	Anne Gossen	Anne Kellerman, Carol Kammen, Rod Howe, Baruch Whitehead, Sherene Baugher, Christine O'Malley, John Spence, Jeff Chusid, Ian Golden, Andy Zepp
Agriculinary Tourism Task Force		STPB Agritourism Rep	Tom Knipe	Rita Rosenberg & Ethan Ash	Ian Golden, Gary Ferguson, Emma Frisch, Wynnie Stein, Laura Winter-Falk, Frederic Bouche, Kevin Moss, Athena Steinkraus, Sue Stafford, Kristy Mitchell, Sarah Imes, Sarah Kelsen, Talia Watson
Outdoor Recreation Tourism Task Force	Monthly	STPB Recreation Rep	Tom Knipe	Andy Zepp & Ian Golden	Brad Treat, Kristy Mitchell
Meeting Facility Ad-Hoc Committee	As needed			Andy Zepp	Gary Ferguson, Ken Jupiter, Kelli Cartmill, Rick Adie, Lynette Scofield, Philly DeSarno, Jennifer Tavares, Martha Armstrong, Tom Knipe, CVB Staff
Communications & Branding Committee				Josh Friedman	John Gutenberger, Anne Kellerman, John Spence, Sue Perlgut, Christy Agnese, Tom Knipe, CVB Staff
Tourism – Higher Education Task Force	TBD – not yet convened	STPB Higher Ed Reps		TBD	Christy Agnese, John Gutenberger, Sue Stafford, Ken Jupiter



<b>Advisory Committees</b>					
<b>Committee</b>	<b>Meetings</b>	<b>Members by appointment</b>	<b>Admin</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Members</b>
Marketing Advisory Committee	Quarterly		CVB Staff		Tom Knipe, Michael Mellor, Ethan Ash , Christy Agnese, Gary Ferguson, Jennifer Tavares, Kelli Cartmill others appointed by CVB
Beautification, Public Art, Signage	Several times a year		Jennifer Tavares		Ken Jupiter, Gary Ferguson, Tom Knipe, Chrys Gardener, Monika Roth, Rick Manning, JoAnn Cornish, John Spence, Jeanne Grace, Tim Logue, Mary Kirkwyland, John Gutenberger
Festivals	One or two times/year		Gary Ferguson		Tom Knipe, Ian Golden, McKenzie Round Jones, Mary Archin, Vicki Armstrong, Stephanie Meyer (PRI), Ryan McCune, Casey Martin, Dave Prunty, Tatiana Sy, Allison Graffin
Tourism Partner Award					Kelli Cartmill, Tom Knipe, Sarah Imes



**CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**  
**TOMPKINS COUNTY STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING BOARD**

*Adopted as an internal board policy via unanimous STPB vote, March 2009*

Tompkins County depends on volunteers to serve on its Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB). STPB members have varied backgrounds and interests. They are active in the community in their professional and private endeavors. Consequently, situations may arise that create a conflict of interest.

This policy applies to all current members of the STPB and all members of any advisory committee involved in the decision making process. It is expected that all persons subject to this policy will conduct themselves honestly and fairly when dealing with STPB business.

A conflict of interest is defined as an activity or interest of a Board member that may cause bias for or against a particular action being considered by the Board such as a grant request. A conflict of interest will be presumed when the Board member or household member has a formal affiliation or interest in an organization, which could expect funding from a particular decision.

Whenever a Board member identifies that a conflict of interest may exist with a funding request, policy decision, or any voting matter considered by the STPB or one of its Committees, the member will inform the STPB Chair or the Committee Chair of the conflict. The Board member may (or may not) participate in the discussion at the appropriate Chair's discretion, but will refrain from voting on the specific request.

At the beginning of each calendar year, current STPB members will complete the Annual Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form. The forms will be given to the Chair and kept on file by the Administrative Assistant of the STPB. This information will be made available to all members of the STPB.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE FORM**  
**TOMPKINS COUNTY STRATEGIC TOURISM PLANNING BOARD**

*To be completed annually by all STPB members*

I recognize that in my capacity as a Member of the STPB that a conflict of interest may arise due to my employment or my relationship to other organizations or programs. I hereby disclose the following with whom I am affiliated.

ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations active in Tompkins County with whom I, or a household member, are affiliated as a Board Member, or in a decision making capacity:

Name of Organization	Affiliation
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

BUSINESSES

All local businesses in Tompkins County in which I, or a household member have ownership or employment that could potentially receive funds from the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

Name of Business	Affiliation
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

I certify that I have read, understand and agree to abide by STPB’s Conflict of Interest Policy and that the information provided above is accurate and true. If I or a household member experience a change in employment or any change in relationship with organizations or businesses which might cause a conflict of interest with the STPB, I will disclose this information to the Chair and amend this Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form.

_____	_____
Print Name	Seat Representation
_____	_____
Signature	Date

# Tompkins County STPB Roles and Responsibilities

## STPB Mission

*The Strategic Tourism Planning Board is charged by the Tompkins County Legislature with providing oversight and strategic direction for tourism initiatives that promote economic development and enhance the quality of life in Tompkins County.*

## Board member questions

- What can our board do?
- What is the Tourism Coordinator role?
- What is the CVB role and the role of other contracted programs?
- How do we collectively stay focused on the Strategic Tourism Plan?
- Where do I fit as an STPB member? What can I contribute?
- What can I do? What can't I do?

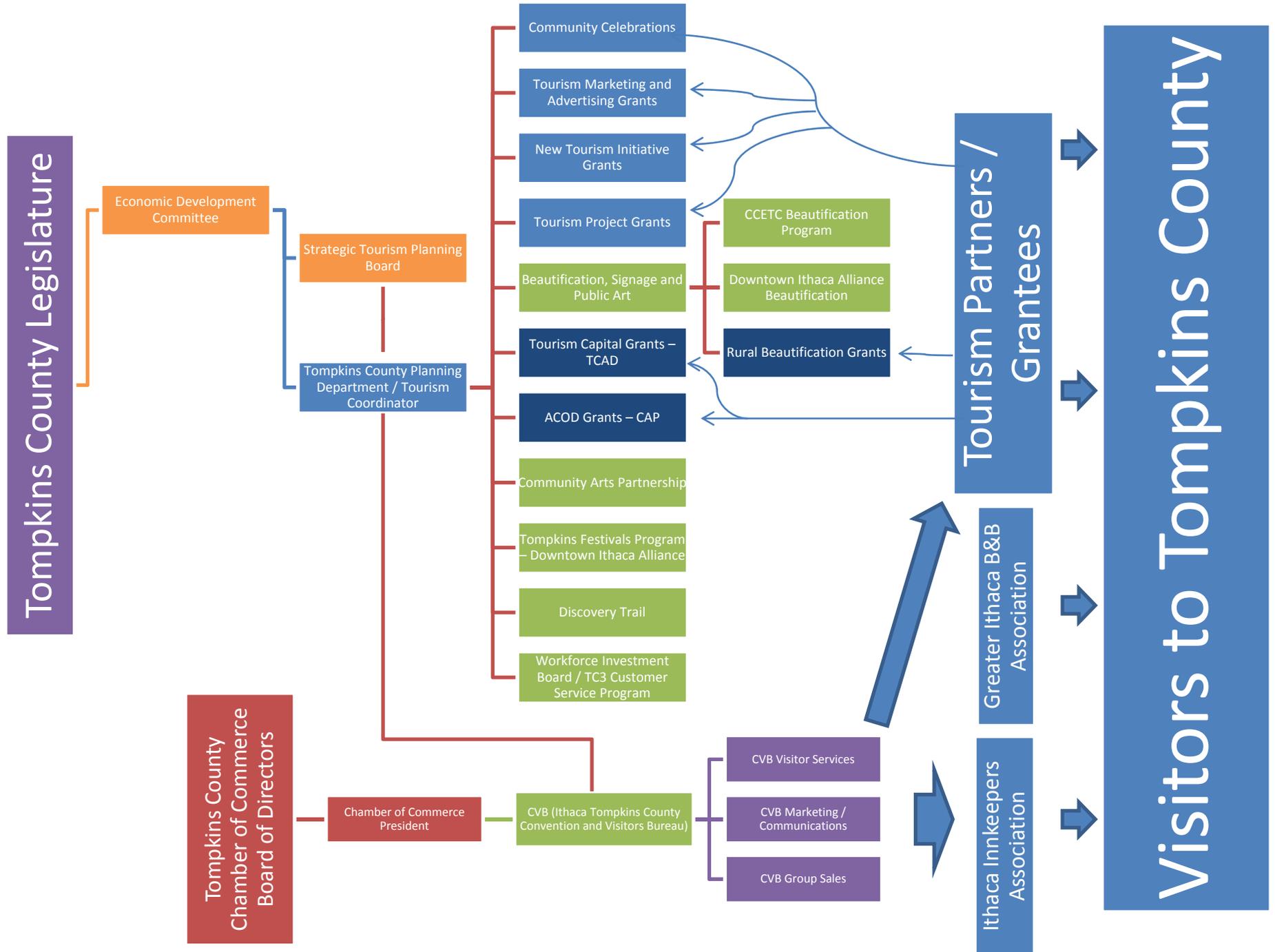
## A range of opportunities for STPB member engagement

			
<p><b>Big Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chair a Tourism Working Group</li> <li>• Lead board engagement on a policy issue</li> <li>• Become an STPB Officer</li> </ul>	<p><b>Small Projects</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research a topic and write it up</li> <li>• Lead a board development initiative</li> <li>• Assume leadership role in advancing an unassigned action</li> <li>• Perform Committee work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ongoing Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve on an STPB Committee</li> <li>• Attend a funded event/project</li> <li>• Act as an STPB liaison to affiliated groups and projects</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minimum Expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend monthly meetings</li> <li>• Read agenda materials</li> <li>• Sector representation</li> <li>• Participate actively in discussions</li> <li>• Ask questions</li> </ul>

## STPB Purpose (From Bylaws)

1. To advise the appropriate committee of the Tompkins County Legislature, as well as the full Tompkins County Legislature, on all aspects of tourism development in Tompkins County.
2. To review and evaluate the activities of all entities receiving funds from the Tompkins County Room Occupancy Tax and to make recommendations to the entities receiving those funds as well as the Tompkins County Legislature in respect to their most appropriate and effective use. This includes the oversight of Tourism Grant Programs in place to assist events and programs of interest to local residents in attracting a broader audience from outside the County.
3. To develop, with input, a tourism policy for review and adoption by the Tompkins County Legislature which shall address all issues raised by reports and information pertinent to all aspects of tourism development.
4. To advise the Tompkins County Legislature, pursuant to the above clauses, on the allocation of proceeds from the Tompkins County Room Occupancy Tax.

Tompkins County Tourism Program  
Organization Chart



**Tompkins County Planning Department**  
**2016**  
**Work Program on Tourism**

**Overview**

The 2016 Work Program is organized by the topics addressed in the Comprehensive Plan and includes those actions identified in the Plan and from previously developed strategies, along with other activities related to Plan topics reflecting ongoing responsibilities of the department. The Work Program also addresses responsibilities of the Department for planning services to County government, assistance provided to municipalities, administrative requirements and staff service on community organization boards and committees. This version of the Planning Department's Work Program includes only those items related to tourism.

**Priorities and Measures of Success**

The priority for the Department in 2016 is to take tangible steps toward initiating each of the activities listed in this ambitious Work Program. We recognize that priorities could change during the year and, as has been the case in the past, unforeseen issues or events could also arise during the year and impact our ability to pursue all of the activities listed.

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**Economy/Tourism**

**Agriculture and Culinary Tourism Strategy (Tom)**

Complete implementation plan for agri-culinary tourism, a focus area in the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan.

**Heritage Tourism Strategy (Tom)**

Complete implementation plan for heritage tourism, a focus area in the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan.

**Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Implementation (Tom)**

Work with Cayuga and Seneca Counties to implement the Cayuga Lake Blueway Trail Plan.

**Outdoor Recreation Tourism Strategy**

Create implementation plan for outdoor recreation tourism, a focus area in the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan.

**Tourism Program Administration (Tom, Dariele, Jennifer)**

Administer the County's four tourism grant programs (Tourism Projects, New Tourism Initiatives, Community Celebrations, and Tourism Marketing and Advertising) and support management of the two tourism grant programs overseen by others (Arts and Culture Organizational Development Grant program and Tourism Capital Grant Program) and the five programs contracted to others (Beautification, Signage and Public Art Program, Tompkins Festivals Program, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Discovery Trail, and the Tourism Workforce Development Program).

**Tourism-Higher Education Working Group (Tom)**

Provide staff support to the Tourism-Higher Education Working Group to meet periodically to share information and explore ideas for enhanced collaboration on tourism development between institutions of higher education and community institutions.

### **Other Tourism Initiatives (Tom)**

- Tompkins Festivals Program Enhancement - Support the Downtown Ithaca Alliance in preparing detailed recommendations for enhancements to the Tompkins Festivals Program.
- Tourism Partner Award Program - Administer the County's program that recognizes community leadership in attracting tourists to Tompkins County.
- Tourism Product Development - Provide guidance and coordinating support to individuals and organizations that are devising new or improved tourism products in accordance with the Strategic Tourism Plan.
- Strategic Tourism Plan Implementation - Administer Strategic Tourism Implementation funding program. Work with STPB to promote the plan and encourage its integration into Tourism Program activities, finalize Measurable Objectives, and work with community partners to implement the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan.
- Wayfinding Signage - Work with the Chamber of Commerce to create a funding and implementation strategy for wayfinding signage plan/system that includes physical signage, as well as new technological wayfinding platforms, and that points to major destinations.
- Beautification Strategy - Support the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce and Cornell Cooperative Extension in completing a five-year beautification strategy.
- Hotel Room Occupancy Tax Policy Review - Review the County's policies on the Hotel Room Occupancy Tax to ensure the appropriate use of tax revenues and for consistency with the Strategic Tourism Plan.
- Program Evaluation System - Develop a system to evaluate local tourism programs in terms of their relationship to the Strategic Tourism Plan.
- Tourism Program Communications Plan – Prepare a communications plan that describes the audiences and purposes of communication from the county tourism program.
- Public Art Grant Program – Support the establishment of pilot public art grant program with CAP.

### **County Role in Trail Development (Tom)**

Provide leadership for the community's efforts to complete priority trails, including the Black Diamond Trail, East Ithaca Recreationway extension to Varna, and South Hill Recreationway extension to Brooktondale.

### **Tourism Budget Coordination (Tom, Joan, Ed)**

Administer tourism budget request process among tourism programs, and coordinate budget among various County departments (including County Administration, Planning, and Finance) to develop a budget proposal for 2017.

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### **Board Support**

Provide staff support to the operation of, and participate as members of the Strategic Tourism Planning Board (Tom, Jennifer)

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### **Board Service**

Serve as member on the Cayuga Lake Scenic Byways Board of Directors (Tom)

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### **Collaborative Partnerships**

Participate in collaborative partnerships with others in the community, regionally or in NY State:

Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council Tourism Working Group (Tom)

Tompkins County Heritage Tourism Network (Tom)

Tompkins County Trails Network (Tom)

# Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Planning Board (STPB) Goals

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## **What goals should the STPB establish for itself as a board, for 2015?**

*1/18/15 Brainstorm results with additions and feedback of the STPB Planning & Evaluation Committee. This is a draft list of goals to support discussion at the 2/18/15 STPB meeting.*

*Goals are separated into Action-Oriented Goals and Policy-Driven Goals. Goals recommended for inclusion in the list of board goals for 2015 by the Planning & Evaluation Committee are listed first.*

*On 2/18, the board will consider whether to move any goals from the "POSSIBLE" list to the list of goals to establish for the board. Another suggestion is to revisit the list of possible goals in July 2015, and consider additions at that time. In the words of P&E Chair Ken Jupiter, by then "we will know if what we have bitten off we have been able to digest".*

## **RECOMMENDED 2015 Action-Oriented Goals**

- Complete the Agriculinary Tourism Implementation Plan by May 2015 and create a tangible program by the end of the year. (Lead: STPB Agriculinary Tourism Task Force)
- Convene a meeting facility task force and report to the board by June 2015. (Lead: STPB Meeting and Conference Facility Task Force)
- Complete program modifications and revised ACOD grant guidelines by mid-year 2015. (Lead: CAP, ACOD Program Review Committee)
- Complete the Heritage Tourism Implementation Plan by September 2015. (Lead: STPB Heritage Tourism Task Force)
- Fund and ensure appropriate scope and representation on client committee for a new comprehensive visitor profile study for Tompkins County. (Leads: CVB, STPB P&E Committee, Study Client Committee)
- Develop a concerted approach to enhancing the demographic diversity of the STPB and associate membership. (Lead: STPB Membership & Bylaws Committee)

## **RECOMMENDED Policy-Driven Goals**

- Identify a threshold of tourism program investment that triggers a more thorough review of an organization or project, and a framework for assessing risk for new initiatives, to follow up on recommendations of the Ticket Center and Wine Center reports. (Lead: P&E Committee)
- Support the CVB as they envision what a visitor center looks like in Ithaca, NY.

## **POSSIBLE Action-Oriented Goals**

- Convene a Higher Education Tourism Working Group.
- Create a communications plan for the Tompkins County Tourism Program.
- Convene an Outdoor Recreation Tourism Task Force
- Monitor the program evaluation planning efforts of all programs funded by Tompkins County room tax using the program evaluation planning model recently used by the CVB.

## **POSSIBLE Policy-Driven Goals**

- Review board makeup for adequate recreation representation.
- Examine Arts and Culture support in other communities to understand our community's support for the arts relative to other communities and our goals.
- Critically examine the tourism program policy around purely generating new tourism through our investments versus starting with the assumption that we need to build our tourism products with local support and investment first in order to have successful community-based tourism.
- Examine the possibilities for increasing revenues for the Tompkins County Tourism Program from a variety of sources

## **REMOVED from list of Possible 2015 Goals**

- Conduct a detailed review of tourism program funding by sector and report on the level/quality of alignment of funding and priorities.
  - Reason for removal: staff-driven, ongoing.
- Use a new "Chmura" study to analyze different sectors' role in the tourism industry, including recreation.
  - Reason for removal: inherent in the study process itself; and doing the study is already a recommended goal.
- Encourage each grant committee to review guidelines to ensure they align with the 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan and are funding the most strategic projects.
  - Reason for removal: staff driven, ongoing.