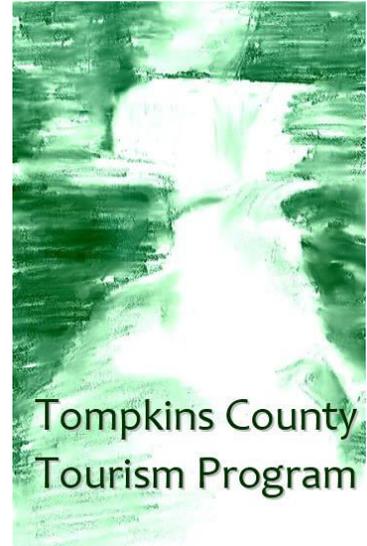


APPLICATION (FULL PROPOSALS)

2016-2017 Strategic Tourism Implementation Funding Opportunity



I. BASIC INFORMATION

Project/Proposal Name: Tompkins County Heritage Center

Applicant Organization: The History Center in Tompkins County

Contact Person: Rod Howe

Phone: 607-273-8284, ext. 222 Email:director@thehistorycenter.net

Request: \$35,500

Instruction: You may use up to 10 pages to answer the questions in the narrative section.

II. PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION

Describe your proposed project. Include a description of project deliverables and date of delivery.

The History Center in Tompkins County has a long tenure in the community (going back to 1863 when Ezra Cornell helped initiate the first Ithaca historical society). We are at an exciting time in our own history as we embark on a physical move and a new location to be shared with collaborators. Our lease ends December 2018 and the trustees have decided that to be a premier local history education and research center for residents and visitors, we will be better served in a different location and setting. Conversations about a potential new center started in 2015 and for the past year there have been several meetings with possible co-location partners. A partnership between The History Center and with the downtown visitors' center of the Convention & Visitors Bureau, which is a division of the Tompkins County Chamber has emerged as a key component. This partnership will provide an opportunity to more fully support heritage tourism and provide a focal point for connecting with other tourism strategies, e.g., agri-tourism and nature based tourism.

The focus for the new location is on the Tompkins Trust Company building located on Bank Alley on the Commons. The building's location, architectural character, and visibility are important advantages for the proposed heritage education center. Currently there are architectural, engineering and code analyses underway. Assuming that the County Legislature does enter an agreement with Tompkins Trust Company to purchase the building, a planning timeline will kick in that will involve more detailed architectural drawings, partnership agreements, the work of branding and naming, operational guidelines, and a capital campaign. From The History Center's perspective there is also prepping for a move that will need to start during 2017.

Renovation costs will come from a capital campaign and other funds (for example there is discussion about this being part of a submission for Upstate Revitalization Initiative funding). There seems to be general agreement that this heritage education center should be "spectacular"; a place that county residents feel proud of and visit frequently and a venue that creates a buzz with visitors.

Overview

The History Center in Tompkins County is leading a project to bring several complementary non-profits together to become a new heritage education center for Ithaca and Tompkins County. This new collaborative entity will serve as a community hub that celebrates our rich history, heritage and culture in an exciting, synergistic way.

The heritage center will be located on the Ithaca Commons, in the heart of Tompkins County, welcoming visitors as a gateway to the area's many cultural destinations and serving as a gathering place for community members. The center will include staff to greet residents and visitors and to orient them to visitor services, exhibits, the library and archival resources, scheduled programs, multi-media presentations covering the history of the City and County, and a retail space.

Key partners involved in the development of a heritage education center include The History Center in Tompkins County, the Tompkins County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Historic Ithaca, Dorothy Cotton Institute, Ithaca Aviation Heritage Foundation and the Wharton Studio Museum. Three main goals are to 1) build community by offering opportunities to deepen connections among County residents through sharing of narratives and place based initiatives; 2) engage the public in a vibrant exploration of our unique community through history, heritage and cultural lenses; and 3) orient visitors to tourism, specifically heritage tourism, opportunities.

We envision a center that celebrates our cultural heritage by offering exhibits and curated learning experiences that inspire and motivate residents and visitors to experience sites throughout the County that personally interest them. The center will offer a compelling narrative of the county's key historical themes, in essence telling the story of who we are as a community. The center will also provide a place for educational programs and gathering opportunities to share narratives and personal histories. We believe that an understanding of the past allows us to examine the present and plan for the future in a positive, inclusive way. For example, the center might play a strong role in orienting visitors to the range of sustainability initiatives underway in our community. Our past has set the foundation for Ithaca and Tompkins County to be a model for sustainable communities. We intend to highlight, in the exhibit space, linkages among the past, the present and the future. We have just started to think of ways to tell our story in the exhibit space and are intrigued by using P.L.A.C.E. as an organizing concept: People, Land, Architecture, Culture and Enterprise. The exhibit space will include permanent exhibits as well as changing exhibits. We envision two or three pockets in the space (the bank vaults) that will have multi-media presentations on key themes.

Overall there is a two year (plus) timeline for the project. This proposal focuses on 2017 with an emphasis on the first 8 months. Deliverables include: community presentations, operational and partnership agreements, a retail space plan, branding language and a name for the center, a concept overview, a website, finalized floor plans, an exhibit design, and an initiated capital campaign. There is also a fair amount of "process" work behind the deliverables, e.g., ongoing partnership meetings.

Tompkins County Support

In the fall, Tompkins County announced that it is exploring the purchase of the Tompkins Trust Company building on the Ithaca Commons to serve as a new home for The History Center in Tompkins County and a proposed heritage education center. As a part of that exploration, the County Legislature approved a \$15,000 appropriation to undertake a structural, mechanical, and codes assessment of the building.

The potential County purchase of a building is tied to the County's longstanding role of providing space for a museum that preserves the records and artifacts that document the County's history. The County is seeking ways to minimize its cost while also maximizing The History Center's role as a community attraction, tourism destination, and anchor for a heritage education center housing several other non-profits involved in promoting the area's history, heritage, and culture.

County Legislature Chair Michael Lane said "The County is approaching the prospect of purchasing a building with due caution. This would, however, create a wonderful historical museum and research facility for the people of our community in the heart of our County Seat. It would have the very real potential of generating additional room tax and sales tax revenue for the County by increasing tourism activity. The building is located in one of the strongest centers for economic development in the County and, over the years, would likely maintain or increase in value."

Lane also noted the County's consideration of the project coincides with the 2017 Tompkins County Bicentennial. "If we decide to go forward, I can't think of a more fitting commemoration of the County's Bicentennial than to provide a permanent home to showcase our history and heritage."

III. STRATEGIC TOURISM IMPLEMENTATION

Document how your proposal responds to goal(s) and action(s) of the Tompkins County 2020 Strategic Tourism Plan and/or a Strategic Priority of the STPB. Identify under which STI funding category you are applying. Describe how your proposal aligns with the aims and policies of the Tompkins County Tourism Program.

The creation of a heritage education center provides a focal point and a foundation for working toward numerous goals and strategies.

This proposal relates to the Tompkins County Heritage Tourism Implementation Plan (Category B) and to that plan's following goals:

- increase overall visitation, length of stays and spending associated with heritage tourism in Tompkins County;
- deepen appreciation and awareness of Ithaca and Tompkins County's history, so that visitors and residents alike take away a richer understanding of and connection to this place;
- improve access for visitors to the area's rich heritage stories, notable people, historic themes and sites, natural history and public art;
- increase coordination and collaboration locally and regionally on heritage tourism initiatives;

-strengthen protection and preservation of sites and intangible assets as the basis for heritage tourism.

This proposal relates to the Tompkins County Heritage Tourism Implementation plan's following strategies and action items:

Institutional Development:

- improve heritage tourism organizations, sites and attractions
- explore the establishment of a new Heritage Center

Interpretation:

- package underdeveloped stories, themes, and assets into visitor experiences and amenities
- establish a shared platform for tour development and promote the development of additional tours.
- develop regional interpretation themes, such as UGRR, early film, early aviation, etc.

Capacity Building:

- enhance the community's capacity for heritage tourism development
- organize a heritage tourism exchange between Ithaca/Tompkins County and another community
- assist in the integration of heritage themes and activities in events and tourism projects

Marketing:

- promote heritage tourism offerings for success
- create a 'Heritage Ambassadors' program

Cities rich in arts and culture attract people because of their quality of life, character, and opportunities for participation and investment. The potential co-located partners collectively bring strong resources and experience in exhibit, program and cultural development. The center will become a key community hub that will spur new and creative ways to promote Ithaca and Tompkins County as a heritage tourism destination, will afford new opportunities for interpreting our past, and provide a venue for county residents to see aspects of their history collected, archived, and interpreted.

NY Senator Gillibrand has proposed designation of the Finger Lakes region as a national heritage area/corridor. Ithaca is a natural hub to orient visitors to the range of what the region has to offer. We expect the center will instill pride of place and we will encourage the development of formal heritage ambassadors. With heritage tourism as an increasing component of tourism in general, this center will help promote quality visitor experiences which will have an economic impact. Equally important is the role that the center will play in building connections within the county. We are a diverse community and the center will be a place for all to come and share their histories. We see Ithaca and Tompkins County as a place where history is made every day.

We see wonderful opportunities for engaging historians, artists and theater representatives to interpret aspects of our history in new and creative ways. As one example, Ithaca and Tompkins County have a long history of being involved in social movements and we foresee highlighting that history using multiple media.

The proposal also relates to the following two critical areas referenced in the 2020 Tompkins County Strategic Tourism plan:

- 1) Develop walking, cycling and driving tours across multiple media (brochures, online maps, apps, audio tours, etc.) of historic sites; historic architecture; local and academic black history sites (including the Underground Railroad/ Freedom Trail in Ithaca); Native American archaeological sites; local industrial history sites (airplanes, guns, typewriters, etc.); homes of local authors (e.g., Nabokov), artists, playwrights; etc.

The center will be a hub for multiple heritage tours and will orient visitors to the wide range of options for exploring the county's history and heritage.

- 2) Provide advocacy, collaboration, and funding to help rebuild The Ithaca Commons with feature elements serving visitors.

The center will be a destination that will draw more people to the recently fully renovated Ithaca downtown area.

IV. EXPECTED BENEFITS

Describe, in as much detail as possible, the specific economic and quality of life benefits that you expect this project to deliver.

By combining the CVB downtown visitors' center, The History Center in Tompkins County and other history/heritage/cultural related organizations we are creating a destination spot for residents and visitors. Given that the center will be on the Ithaca Commons the economic benefit will come from increased visitors to that area. For example we expect to draw students and parents from the three higher education academic institutions. For visitors seeking a unique tourism experience they will learn more about the opportunities available and therefore better able to plan their time in the county. We expect this to become a regional destination as a gateway to what the Finger Lakes region has to offer.

By co-locating and working together, the center will be able to attract new funding sources earmarked for collaborative projects. Together, we will also be able to offer new approaches to programming and exhibits, resulting in a broader offering to feature and serve new, diverse audiences. Themes that might be explored together include the history of innovation and engineering, involvement in social movements, housing and the built environment, the experiences of racial and ethnic groups, and sustainability. Exhibits related to the rich history of Cornell, Ithaca College, and Tompkins Cortland Community College and their economic and social impact on the County will be offered. These new exhibits and programs will enhance appeal to residents, visitors and tourists alike.

A heritage education center will serve as a gateway to residents and tourists, allowing visitors of all ages to gain new perspectives about what being part of our community entails. It will provide an orientation to this unique place. Ithaca and Tompkins County have "place capital," supported by rich history and diverse narratives. We are in the process of developing branding language to mark Ithaca and Tompkins County as a heritage tourism destination. The tag line for that initiative is "we make history every day."

Benefits to Audiences:

The heritage education center partners bring complementary perspectives that will result in new programming opportunities to reach a wider audience, including local residents and visitors. A heritage education center will serve three audiences in new ways:

- 1) Visitors now come to unrelated entities and need to put the pieces together for themselves; a heritage education center will provide more in-depth initial experiences, which provide visitors with a clearer overall orientation to Ithaca and Tompkins County.
- 2) Residents will have enhanced opportunities to come together in new ways. A heritage education center will serve all citizens by providing a local history research library as well as programmatic series on timely issues.
- 3) Staff of the co-located organizations will be able to work together in new ways. Consistent interaction creates opportunities for joint exhibits and programs. While it is too early to tell what will happen by partnering more fully, we expect there to be administrative savings and a more financially sustainable environment providing stability for the partnering non-profits.

A spectacular, well-connected heritage education center could position Tompkins County to take advantage of new opportunities in heritage tourism, and drive tourism jobs and dollars into our economy.

V. ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Provide a description of the applicant organization(s), its mission, board/governance, annual budget, year founded, key staff, how this proposal fits with other activities, and record in implementing similar types of projects.

Mission Statement: The History Center in Tompkins County helps people use the tools of history to understand the past, gain perspective on the present, and make informed decisions about the future. In order to accomplish this mission, we preserve and encourage access to The History Center's unique collections, seek out the diverse needs and interests of our community, design learning experiences and provide services that respond to those needs, create opportunities for people to learn about themselves and their place in the world, and provide a neutral environment for public discussions that bring historical perspective to current issues.

The History Center offers regular exhibits, formal and informal talks, a strong program of educational activities for children and adults. The History Center is a member of the Discovery Trail and Kids Discover the Trail, and through our unique program at the Eight Square School House, fourth graders experience an 1892 school day. We offer a space for public discussions on contemporary issues, a place for civic engagement where issues and questions can be viewed through the lens of history.

Background

The History Center in Tompkins County traces its origin back to 1863 when Ezra Cornell, founder of Cornell University, formed a local historical society. The DeWitt Historical Society was first formed in 1899 to promote Tompkins County History, and was named in honor of Simeon DeWitt, a prominent early Ithacan. In 1935, the Society was reorganized 'to encourage research into local

history and preserve objects and documents of historical significance.’ Its charter was granted by the State University of New York on November 21st, 1947. In 2004, the DeWitt Historical Society was renamed The History Center in Tompkins County. This name change and a new strategic plan resulted in more focused attention on the educational and research activities of the organization.

Employees:

Executive Director Rod Howe brings community and economic development expertise from a research and educational perspective. He has a Ph.D. in American History from Boston University. He is a native of Tompkins County and passionate about the county as a unique place. Rod works in partnership with THC's Board of Trustees and employees. The employee team involves five additional individuals. Donna Eschenbrenner (32 hours/week), Director of Archives and Research Services and acting Curator, provides oversight to the collections and exhibits. She has been with THC since 2000. Carole West (32 hours/week), Eight Square Schoolhouse and Youth Education Director, oversees children’s educational programs and offers targeted teen and adult programs. Ms. West has been with THC since 2002. Ksenia Ionova (32 hours/week), Visitor Services and Outreach Coordinator, works to ensure quality public engagement. She also promotes everything that we do via the website, newsletter, media releases, partnership networks and social media. Ksenia works closely with the Executive Director to plan and implement our program offerings. She has been an employee since the fall of 2016 (and before that was a volunteer). Karen Binder started as our Office Manager/Bookkeeper in January 2016. This is a shared position with our sister organization Historic Ithaca (30 hours total; 15 hours per week with each organization). Cindy Cantu (20 hours/week), Design Coordinator, started in May 2016 and provides technical support for exhibits and educational programs. This equates to approximately 4.5 full time equivalents.

The Board of Trustees currently has fourteen members that represent the racial, age, occupation, sex, and geographic diversity of the community. The Board meets monthly. There are seven committees: Executive, Board Development, Resource Development, Finance, Collections, Program and Personnel. The Program Committee also include staff members. The Executive Director participates in all committees. The Board is cognizant of its key roles: setting policies; ensuring fiduciary responsibility; reviewing collaborations that go beyond typical partnering opportunities; and selecting, supporting, and evaluating the Executive Director.

Our current budget is \$398,392 (Fiscal Year July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).

The History Center’s strategic plan, completed in 2013, identified three main areas of focus: broadening our constituency through programming, enhancing our visibility through marketing, partnerships, and relationships, and improving our sustainability as a fiscally strong organization that attracts and retains motivated individuals.

Programmatically, over the past 18 months, the organization has focused on intergenerational connections, heritage tourism, oral histories and Tompkins County’s involvement in social movements.

VI. BUDGET NARRATIVE

Describe how you propose to use the requested funds.

The funds are needed to address four key areas:

- 1) THC's Executive Director will act as project manager and will provide the necessary oversight for planning. THC salary support is also requested for planning related to: a) prepping to move our archives and collections and for safe storage space, b) the research library (in partnership with Historic Ithaca), and c) heritage tourism components. **\$18,000**. These funds will be matched by the significant amount of time that THC is devoting to the center and for the upcoming move which includes the time of trustees, other employees, and volunteers.
- 2) Architectural drawings and renderings, branding and communication, and exhibit design. **\$5000** (we expect \$26,500 via NYSCA REDC funding to support this work). There has already been an investment of \$20,000 for initial architectural, engineering and code assessments; \$5000 from the Park Foundation secured by THC and \$15,000 appropriated by the Tompkins County legislature.
- 3) Capital Campaign readiness and engaging a professional fundraiser. **\$11,500** to include a feasibility study with a few targeted interviewees, a structure to build fundraising rubric, cultivation strategies, and time with capital campaign committee. Further funds needed to carry out a capital campaign will be enfolded into the campaign.
- 4) Developing a partnership community – funds have been included to visit a similar center. **\$1000**. There has already been a serious commitment of time of all the partnering entities for over a year. This was kick started by \$5000 awarded by Triad Foundation to engaged MaryBeth Bunge to work with the partners and on the initial concept.

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VII. WORK PLAN NARRATIVE

A core team comprised of Rod Howe, Jennifer Tavares, Jerry Dietz (capital campaign co-chair), Gwen Seaquist (THC board president) and Noah Demarest will oversee the proposal components. That core team will stay engaged with the following entities prepared to assist the initiative, including City and County representatives, Tompkins County Area Development, and the Downtown Ithaca Alliance.

The following will be engaged (in some cases acting as consultants at critical junctures):

STREAM Collaborative, Noah Demarest as lead, <http://www.streamcolab.com/>. STREAM offers a wide array of services related to design, architecture, landscape architecture and new media as it relates to environmental graphics and the built environment.

St. John Design Group, <http://www.stjohndg.com/>, their team has over 30 years of branding, marketing and exhibit design experience.

Todd Zwigard Architects, <http://tzaia.com/>, a service-oriented architectural design firm with a history of creating enduring, elegant, innovative and sustainable environments suited to the specific needs of each client.

The Solstice Group, Paula Peter founder, <http://thesolsticegroup.com/>. The Solstice Group offers consulting and coaching services to non-profit (501c3) organizations in the areas of fundraising, campaigns, strategic planning, board development, and leadership coaching.

There are others that may be engaged to help with website design, to facilitate meetings with collaborators and to assist with program management as needed (coming out of category numbers 2 and 4 listed in the budget narrative). The core team will make decisions on how to complement the services provided by those listed above.

Please refer to the work plan schematic for an overview of the work plan components. The schematic suggests the timing of deliverables. Several components will require multiple meetings and conversations.

Rod Howe and THC employees will provide oversight for:

- Plan for archives and collections
- Plan for research library
- Plan for exhibits
- Plan for heritage tourism experience (with the heritage tourism group)
- Mobilizing for move

Core team (or a subset of) with Rod Howe acting as Project Manager will provide oversight for:

- Engaging with Tompkins County government
- Review initial assessments and use that info to develop capital campaign target
- Overall coordination
- Community presentations
- Partner meetings
- Operational and partnership agreements
- Retail agreements
- Work on state funding

Stream Collaborative, in partnership with others, will:

- Draft, refine and finalize floor plans
- Design overall exhibit, visitor services, library and program spaces
- Develop renderings of the spaces
- Develop branding language, concept overview and website
- Develop plan for archives and collections

Solstice Group, in partnership with capital campaign committee, will:

- Conduct interviews
- Assess campaign and develop rubric and cultivation strategies
- Develop campaign budget
- Package material to initiate a silent campaign
- Develop strategies for silent and public campaigns

VII. IMPACT OF FUNDING

What would be the specific impact(s) on the project of receiving less funding than you are requesting?

Making an Investment

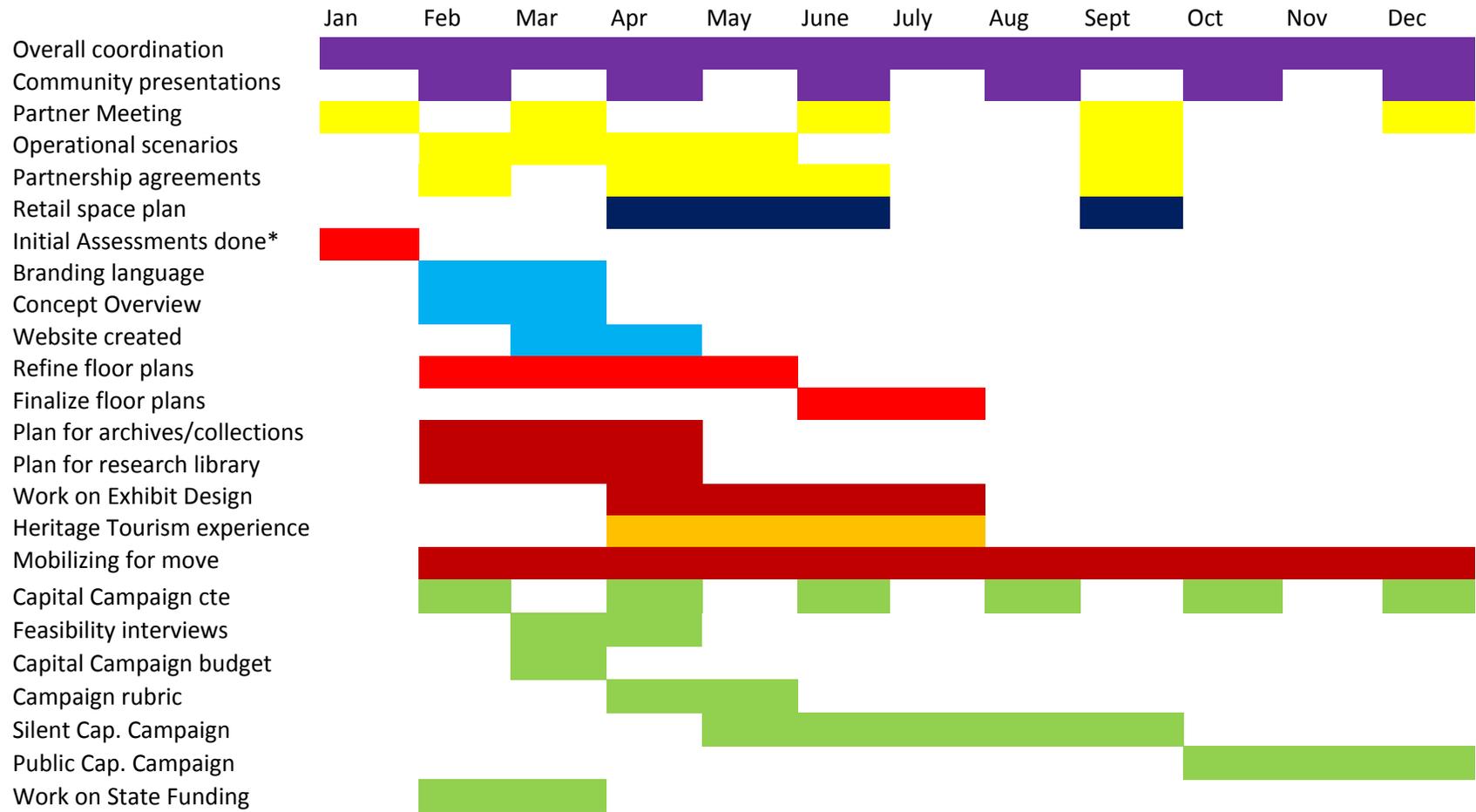
Investments in a heritage education center will continue to revitalize downtown, give Ithaca and Tompkins County a place that welcomes visitors and gives them an initial sense of what is special about this place. This dynamic center will bring our community together, instilling a pride in our

community, while giving visitors a base from which to launch their personal adventures in Ithaca and Tompkins County leading to staying longer, supporting the economy, and sharing their experience to promote the area more widely.

The funding is very important to help us fully develop a plan that is integrative and meets the needs of numerous partners and stakeholders. This is a complex project that is in-sync with Tompkins County's tourism goals.

This funding, along with the Regional Economic Development Council's NYSCA funding, will help set the stage for an Upstate Revitalization Initiative proposal.

Heritage Center/The History Center in Tompkins County: Work Plan
 Two funding sources: REDC-NYSCA and Tompkins County Strategic Tourism Implementation Funds



*architectural, engineering, code

STI Project Name:

Strategic Tourism Implementation Grant Application - Budget/Expense Report Form

Instructions: Complete this form and submit it with the application. If awarded a grant, the applicant must also fill in this form after project is complete with actual expenses and submit the document with the narrative report within 60 days of the completion of the project to:

Tom Knipe, Principal Planner / Tourism Program Director, tknipe@tompkins-co.org or Tompkins County Planning, 121 East Court St., Ithaca, NY 14850. **Email submission is strongly preferred.**

EXPENSES - CASH	USE	DESCRIPTION (provide details)	ESTIMATED AMOUNT IN \$	ESTIMATED USE OF GRANT	DIFFERENCE to be made up with other resources
<i>List all major cash expenses Add or delete rows & categories as needed</i>	Personnel Wages	THC staff time on heritage center	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$0
	Personnel Fringe		\$	\$	\$0
	Materials		\$2,500		\$2,500
	Services	Consultants	\$42,500	\$16,500	\$26,000
	Occupancy & Utilities		\$	\$	\$
	Travel		\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0
	Administration		\$	\$	\$
	Other (name)			\$0	
	SUBTOTAL (cash expenses)		\$64,000	\$35,500	\$28,500

IN-KIND SUPPORT	USE/SOURCE	DESCRIPTION (provide details)	ESTIMATED AMOUNT IN \$
<i>List all major sources of in-kind support Add or delete rows & categories as needed</i>	Donated goods		\$
	Donated services		\$15,000
	Other	Park Foundation	\$5,000
	Other	County Government	\$15,000
	Other	Triad Foundation	\$5,000
	SUBTOTAL (in-kind support)		\$40,000
	TOTAL EXPENSES (cash expenses and in-kind support)		\$104,000
	STI Grant Share of Total Expenses*		0.341346154

REVENUES - CASH	SOURCE	DESCRIPTION (provide details)	ESTIMATED AMOUNT IN \$
<i>List major sources of cash support Add or delete rows & categories as needed</i>	Strategic Tourism Implementation (STI) Grant		\$35,500
	Other Grant (name)	REDC NYSCA	28500
	Other (name)		\$
	Other (name)		\$
	SUBTOTAL (cash revenues)		\$64,000
	CASH REVENUES LESS CASH EXPENSES (Profit)		\$0

Note: this form is available as an Excel spreadsheet file. Email tknipe@tompkins-co.org

January 5, 2017

Rod Howe
Executive Director
The History Center in Tompkins County
401 E. State Street, Suite 100
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850



Dear Rod:

I am writing on behalf of our entire staff at STREAM Collaborative Architecture + Landscape Architecture DPC to express our support of the Strategic Tourism Implementation Grant application.

As you know, our firm has played an active role in exploratory discussions of the “heritage education center” for Ithaca and Tompkins County during the past six months. We are currently working on a feasibility study and overall space planning for the Tompkins Trust Company building. We look forward to continuing on to the next phase of design as the architects coordinating a team of consultants. This team will likely include branding designers St. John Design Group and architect Todd Zwigard for consulting on the exhibit design

As the project moves forward, we are committed to providing our creativity and technical design expertise to help bring an exciting new component to downtown.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Noah Demarest", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Noah Demarest
AIA, RA, RLA, LEED AP
Principal

noah@streamcolab.com
607.216.8802