

Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council

# 2045

# Long Range Transportation Plan



## LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

It is interesting to note how often transportation is accurately mentioned as a challenge and opportunity in any future looking sustainability, equity, or political analysis. The Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council's 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan was developed with a conscious recognition of the importance of the transportation sector across our economy and the sector's role in securing an equitable high quality of life for Tompkins County residents.

Transportation is a key consideration across all economic sectors – housing, commercial, health, education, etc. In all economic decisions, from government policy to businesses to households, we have an opportunity to advance the 2045 Plan goals of Sustainable Accessibility to the benefit of all our communities.

There are many ways to move towards a more sustainable transportation system. At the 2024 conference of the national Association of MPOs, an ex-director of the Federal Highway Administration said that "the cities that will win the 21st century are those reducing car dependency". The transportation sector is responsible for a third of carbon emissions in Tompkins County. The bulk of these are generated from light duty vehicles. Analysis shows that to reach our community's stated greenhouse gas emissions goals we need to concurrently drive less, reduce drive-alone trips, and make our fleet of motor vehicles cleaner by switching to electric vehicles. Transportation professional and community partners in Tompkins County have done much to expand transportation options and give people the opportunity to reduce their car dependency. Local transportation options and initiatives include TCAT, Gadabout, Ithaca Carshare, Bike Walk Tompkins, Way2Go, Golthaca and Ithaca Bikeshare. Together with taxis, ride hailing, inter-city bus service, car rental and air travel from Ithaca Tompkins International airport, residents and visitors to Tompkins County have access to an uncommon number of transportation options for a small upstate NY urban area.

That said, much remains to be done. Driving alone remains the dominant mode of transportation for the thousands of commuters who travel into Tompkins County every day. People continue to use their automobiles for short trips because they don't feel safe on a bicycle. There is an unmet demand for more transit service, particularly in rural areas of our county. These are just a few examples of the challenges we continue to face.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Ithaca Urbanized Area and Tompkins County, the ITCTC plays the role of convener to encourage collaborative innovation in the local transportation sector. In such a role, the ITCTC will continue to advance the Sustainable Accessibility goals, which provide guidance for decisions that will build a connected, sustainable, and equitable transportation sector. The ITCTC will also continue to work with local leadership from municipal, governmental agencies and community non-profit partners to generate community involvement in transportation planning.

The next 20 years need to be a time of action to address the environmental, economic and equity issues we face. The 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan offers a blueprint to guide transportation decisions. The ITCTC stands ready to work collaboratively with partners across the community to advance policies, programs and projects that meet demands of the time.

Sincerely,



**Rod Howe**  
Chair, Policy Committee  
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council



**Fernando de Aragón**  
Staff Director  
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