



Inclusion Through Diversity

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December 1, 2009
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Highlights of the **December 1, 2009** meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature

Long Range Transportation Plan Addresses County Emission Goal

The Legislature heard an update from the Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council on development of the 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan, which addresses area transportation needs to meet the County Comprehensive Plan goal to achieve a 40% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030. Director Fernando Dearagon told legislators the Council's analysis shows that meeting the goal will be challenging, but that the goal can be met through a combination of reducing drive-alone vehicle trips and increasing use of alternative transportation modes. The report indicates that at least a 25% reduction of vehicle trips will be required (including reducing in-commuting by nearly half), combined with use of alternative vehicle technology. Dearagon said that both the reduction in vehicle trips and the use of clean, energy-efficient vehicles will be critical to achieving the emissions goal, and that the County must encourage transportation alternatives such as mass transit, vanpooling, ride-sharing and car-sharing, bicycling and pedestrian travel, as well as options such as telecommuting and "smart" land use, combating urban sprawl. He added that national and state policy coordination will be important for implementation of elements of the local transportation program.

Contact: Fernando Dearagon, Director, Ithaca Tompkins County Transportation Council, 274-5570.

Legislature Authorizes Precautionary Bonding Authority

The Legislature, in a standard year-end resolution, delegated to Finance Director David Squires authorization to issue and sell \$10 million in revenue anticipation notes, if needed, in anticipation of receipt of state aid during the 2010 fiscal year. The vote was unanimous, with Legislator Leslyn McBean-Clairborne excused. On the advice of Director Squires, the Legislature increased the potential bonding authority by \$2 million over the standard amount of \$8 million, Squires advising that the increased authority is prudent, in light of uncertainty about how quickly anticipated state aid will be paid. Mr. Squires told the Legislature he is "really alarmed" by the budget situation in Albany and said the County must protect its cash flow liquidity should the State withhold aid because of its fiscal problems. "If in fact the State stops paying its partners, it has had and will have consequences on our ability to pay our own bills," Mr. Squires said.

Contact: Finance Director David Squires, 274-5544

Among other actions, the Legislature

- As part of the ongoing review of Rules and Procedures of the Legislature, amended the rule governing the Order of Business at Legislature meetings. The Legislature considered wording changes recommended by the Legislature's special Rules and Procedures Committee, as well as several modifications recommended by legislators, in a nearly hour-long review. The vote was 11-3, with Legislators Greg Stevenson, Tyke Randall and Kathy Luz Herrera opposed and Legislator Leslyn McBean-Clairborne excused.
- Approved, without dissent, revisions to five County policies, as part of the Legislature's ongoing program, through its Government Performance and Workforce Relations Committee, to update the County's administrative manual..

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