



## ***Mobilizing Regional Climate Action in Tompkins County***

*Peter Bardaglio  
Climate Smart Community Webinar  
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- Climate change already underway in New York
- Average temperatures in have risen by 2°F since 1970 – winter temperatures 4°F warmer
- 67% increase in number of 2-inch rainfall events occurring over 48-hour period since 1950s



- Changes in NY precipitation patterns projected: increased amount in winter and decreased amount in late summer or fall
- Lower rainfall amounts in summer may lead to more droughts



- Warmer temperatures and changing precipitation patterns bring both challenges and opportunities for NY agriculture
- Increased insect, disease, and weed pressure, but also longer growing season – lengthened by nearly week since 1960s

- Local infrastructure, energy grid, schools, hospitals vulnerable to impact of climate change
- Railways and roads in low-lying areas, water treatment plants, bridges may need to be relocated or rebuilt due to changing climate
- Emergency plans will need to anticipate increased incidences of flooding and road closures





- Local and regional planners need to integrate climate change trends into comprehensive planning, not just emergency planning
- Will allow communities to adapt and become more resilient
- Key to success in Tompkins County is effectiveness of collaboration among different community sectors: government, education, business, nonprofit



- Fortunate to have forward-looking planners in Tompkins County who are doing both
- Tompkins County, City of Ithaca, and towns of Ithaca and Caroline all NYS Climate Smart Communities
- Also, County providing leadership for development and implementation of regional sustainability plan: Cleaner Greener Communities

# Tompkins County





## **The Collaborative Landscape**

- Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative (TCCPI)
- Park Foundation Local Sustainability Initiative
- Sustainable Tompkins
- Ithaca Carshare
- Groundswell Center for Local Food and Farming
- Black Oak Wind Farm
- Solar Tompkins



## What is TCCPI?

- **Regional multisector collaboration** launched in June 2008
- **Seeks to leverage climate action commitments** made by:
  - Cornell University
  - Ithaca College
  - Tompkins Cortland Community College
  - Tompkins County
  - City of Ithaca, towns of Caroline, Dryden, and Ithaca
- **Website:** [www.tccpi.org](http://www.tccpi.org)

# TC CPI | Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative



## Strategy:

- **Establish and mobilize a multisector coalition** of local community leaders who are committed to:
  - Reducing greenhouse gas emissions
  - Accelerating transition to clean energy
  - Increasing energy efficiency and energy conservation
  - Strengthening campus and community resiliency
- **Leaders-as -host**, engaging stakeholders as co-creators: collaborate and connect, not command and control

**Business/Finance**

- AFCU
- HOLT Architects
- Taitem Engineers
- Travis Hyde Properties

**Higher Education**

- Cornell University
- Ithaca College
- TC Community College
- TC Coop Extension

**Government**

- TC Legislature
- TC Planning Dept
- City of Ithaca
- Towns of Caroline, Dryden, and Ithaca

**Collaborative Support**

Sustainable Tompkins  
Park Foundation

**Nonprofits**

- Cayuga Medical Center
- Museum of Earth
- Finger Lakes Land Trust
- Sciencenter

**Youth**

- Cornell Kyoto Now
- Ithaca College
- Ithaca High School
- New Roots Charter High School
- Lehman Alternative Community School



## Communications and Outreach

- Monthly meetings of steering committee and general group
  - Serve as sounding board for county climate adaptation & energy planning
- Website & Facebook Page
- Bimonthly electronic newsletter
- Annual report on member accomplishments



## Examples of projects:

- Tompkins Energy Conservation Corps and other youth engagement efforts (Youth Leadership Summit last spring)
- EPA Climate Showcase Community grant: EcoVillage at Ithaca
- Get Your GreenBack Tompkins: Countywide energy campaign to raise public awareness:
- Black Oak Wind Farm: 11.9MW community wind project
- Ithaca 2030 District: Cornell Cooperative Extension, HOLT Architects, Taitem Engineers, Travis Hyde Properties ([www.2030districts.org](http://www.2030districts.org))

## **Conclusion:**

- Communities that work together to embrace sustainability and resilience and embed them into mission, vision, and leadership will flourish in 21<sup>st</sup> century



*Food for Thought*



“In times of change, learners inherit the earth, while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.”- Eric Hoffer

*Website:* [www.tccpi.com](http://www.tccpi.com)

*Blog:* [www.rebootingthefuture.com](http://www.rebootingthefuture.com)

*Twitter:* [@rebootingfuture](https://twitter.com/rebootingfuture)

*E-mail:* [pbardaglio@gmail.com](mailto:pbardaglio@gmail.com)

**Thank you!**