PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

This special meeting of the PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD will be held at **6:00 p.m.** on **TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 29, 2020**. City Hall remains closed to the public. This meeting will be conducted remotely via the online platform Zoom, pursuant to the Governor’s Executive Order 202.1. The meeting will also be live streamed at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7RtJN1P_RFaFW2IVCnTrDg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7RtJN1P_RFaFW2IVCnTrDg).

Instructions for commenting to the Planning Board

Scheduled Public Hearings: There are no public hearings scheduled for this meeting. General Public Comments: There will be no public comments read at this meeting. Written comments can be sent to the contact(s) listed below. All comments received will be forwarded it to the Planning Board for their consideration. Written comments received in advance of the meeting give the Board/Committee time to consider them fully.

All comments and questions can be emailed to Anya Harris at aharris@cityofithaca.org or Lisa Nicholas at lnicholas@cityofithaca.org. Or call 607-274-6550.

If you have a disability & would like specific accommodation to participate, please contact the City Clerk at 274-6570 by 12:00 p.m., 2-3 business days (not including weekends/holidays) before the meeting.

Start Times: Start times are approximate only — APPLICANTS are responsible for being available at whatever time(s) their agenda item(s) is actually discussed.

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<tr>
<td>1 Agenda Review</td>
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<td>2 Ithaca Build Grant – Review &amp; Discussion</td>
<td>6:05</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Zoning Appeals – Review draft Recommendations</td>
<td>6:35</td>
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<tr>
<td>• #3164, 215 E State/MLK Jr St, Area Variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>• #3162, 120 E Green St, Area Variances</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 June 2020 Board Retreat -- Discuss Notes &amp; Next Steps</td>
<td>6:45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Adjournment</td>
<td>8:00</td>
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**BUILD 2019 Project Information - Please complete all fields.**

**PLEASE DO NOT CHANGE FILE NAME AND DO NOT COPY/PASTE**

**TO AVOID COMPROMISING FORM INTEGRITY**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Name</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Name</strong></td>
<td>Route 13 Complete Street Planning</td>
<td>Enter a <strong>concise</strong> descriptive <strong>title</strong> for the project. This should be the same title used in the Grants.gov SF-424 submission and the application narrative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Description</strong></td>
<td>Ithaca is redeveloping its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally-designated Opportunity Zone. This revitalization is hindered by poorly connected roads. Route 13 is a four-lane highway that separates Ithaca neighborhoods from the Cayuga Lake waterfront. The City seeks planning resources to transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street with improved crossings at key intersections, clearly-marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, Ithaca will extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront. The project will improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.</td>
<td>Describe the project in plain English terms generally understood by the public, using <strong>no more than 100 words</strong>. For example, “The project will replace the existing bridge over the W river on Interstate-X between the cities of Y and Z” or “the BUILD Grant will fund construction activities for streetcar service from location X to location Y.” Please <strong>do not</strong> describe the project’s benefits, background, or alignment with the selection criteria in this description field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban/Rural</strong></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Identify whether the project is <strong>located in a rural or urban area</strong>, using the drop-down menu. For BUILD 19, a project is designated as urban if it is located within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urbanized area that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2010 Census. If a project is located outside a Census-designated urbanized area with a population greater than 200,000, it is designated as a rural project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urbanized Area</strong></td>
<td>Ithaca, NY</td>
<td>If you have identified the project as &quot;urban,&quot; please select the <strong>associated 2010 Census-designated urbanized area (UA)</strong> from the drop-down. If you identified the project as &quot;rural&quot; but it is located in an UA with a population under 200,000, please select the UA from the drop-down. If you have identified the project as &quot;rural&quot; and it is not located in a non-urbanized area, please select &quot;Not located in an urbanized area&quot; from the drop-down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capital or Planning</strong></td>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Identify the project as <strong>capital</strong> or <strong>planning</strong>. The &quot;capital&quot; designation should be used for projects that are requesting funding primarily for the physical development, acquisition, or improvement of surface transportation capital infrastructure. The &quot;planning&quot; designation should be used for projects that are requesting funding primarily for aspects of planning, preparation, or design.</td>
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### BUILD 2019 Project Information - Please complete all fields.

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<tr>
<td>Project Type</td>
<td>Road - Complete Streets</td>
<td>Identify the Primary and Secondary project type combination that most closely aligns with your project from the choices in the drop-down menu. See the “Project Types” tab in this file for further information and project type definitions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Project Location Zip Code</td>
<td>14850</td>
<td>Identify the 5-digit zip code of the project location. If the project is located in multiple zip codes, please identify the most centrally located zip code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Previously Submitted?</td>
<td>Yes - BUILD/TIGER</td>
<td>Identify whether the project was submitted in a prior BUILD/TIGER or INFRA round, using the drop-down menu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior BUILD/TIGER Funds Awarded to Project?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Identify whether the project has previously received BUILD/TIGER funding, and if so, whether that funding was through a planning or capital grant, using the drop-down menu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY19 INFRA Application?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Select &quot;Yes&quot; from the drop-down menu if this project is also being submitted to the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program (also known as INFRA) for Fiscal Year 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount Requested</td>
<td>$1,372,533</td>
<td>Enter the total amount of BUILD funds requested for this project in this application. For capital projects, the minimum urban entry is $5,000,000 and the minimum rural entry is $1,000,000. For planning projects, the minimum entry is $1. The maximum entry for both types is $25,000,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Project Cost</td>
<td>$2,745,066</td>
<td>Enter the total cost of the project. This should equal the sum of Total Federal Funding and Total Non-Federal Funding. This value may not be less than the amount requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Federal Funding</td>
<td>$1,372,533</td>
<td>Enter the amount of funds committed to the project from ALL Federal sources including the proposed BUILD amount. For BUILD projects designated as urban, Federal funding cannot exceed 80% of total project cost as outlined in section C.2 of the BUILD NOFO.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Non-Federal Funding</td>
<td>$1,372,533</td>
<td>Enter the amount of funds committed to the project from non-Federal sources. For BUILD projects designated as urban, the total non-Federal funding amount must be greater than or equal to 20% of the project cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Government?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Select “Yes” from the drop-down menu if the applicant is a Federally recognized tribal government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal Benefits?</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>If the applicant is not a Federally recognized tribal government, is the project located on tribal land? And if not, does it have direct tribal benefits? Answer using the drop-down menu.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Corporation Involvement</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Does this project involve (a) private entity(ies) that will receive a direct and predictable financial benefit if the project is selected for award? This includes, but it not limited to, private owners of infrastructure facilities being improved and private freight shippers or carriers directly benefitting from completion of the proposed project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Corporation Name(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td>If this project directly involves or benefits a specific private corporation, please list the corporation(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TIFIA/RRIF?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Is the project currently, or does this project anticipate applying for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) or Railroad Rehabilitation &amp; Improvement Financing (RRIF) loans?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Financing Program?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>If your application is unsuccessful, would you like to be contacted about the Department’s financing program?</td>
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Route 13 Corridor & Cayuga Waterfront Revitalization Project

City of Ithaca Requests $1,372,533 in U.S. DOT BUILD Planning Resources to Improve Key Intersections and the Route 13 Corridor Connecting Residents to Spur Waterfront Investments

JULY 15, 2019

Applicant: City of Ithaca, New York
Type of Applicant: Local Government, Urban
Location: Ithaca, New York
BUILD Planning Grant Request: $1,372,533

Project Contact: Jennifer Kusznir
Senior Economic Development Planner
607-257-6971
jkusznir@cityofithaca.org
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## ATTACHMENTS

- Letters of Support
- Project Area Map
- Traffic Snapshot
- Crash Incidents
- Bus Routes
- Plan Ithaca Excerpts
- NYSDOT Press Release
- City Harbor Site Plan
Executive Summary

The City of Ithaca is a community of 30,999 residents in Central New York and is located at the southern shore of Cayuga Lake. New redevelopment opportunities are lining up along the waterfront in a federally-designated Opportunity Zone. This Complete Street and intersection redesign project can unlock and enhance significant economic development potential and set the stage for multi-story, mixed-use development and employment-based uses in the community.

Route 13 (also known as North Meadow Street) is a four-lane highway that splits neighborhoods to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. Given the speed of vehicles and lack of infrastructure to support pedestrians and cyclists, this part of Route 13, from Cascadilla Street up to Fall Creek, is a significant obstacle to waterfront revitalization around the Ithaca Marina, Ithaca Farmers Market, and Ithaca Community Gardens. To revitalize the waterfront, Ithaca needs to enhance transportation safety, accessibility, and connectivity. The City has a bold plan to transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections with 3rd Street and Dey Street, clearly marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, the City intends to upgrade the Dey Street and 3rd Street intersections with Route 13 and extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront from the Northside neighborhood. This will alleviate traffic from 3rd Street while fostering new connections to incoming waterfront redevelopment.

The City requests $1,372,533 in U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Planning resources to redesign this Route 13 corridor segment and the 5th Street extension to the Cayuga waterfront area. The project will improve safety by enhancing accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, while using Complete Street and other design best practices to more effectively direct traffic. The project will upgrade existing road infrastructure and improve key intersections to increase functionality, efficiency, and guidance for all users. Moreover, the project will increase connectivity to and stimulate new Cayuga waterfront reinvestment and business innovation around the well-established Ithaca Farmers Market. In a community that already is heavily dependent on pedestrian access and transit ridership, this corridor upgrade will encourage mode shifts to reduce vehicle miles traveled, idling, fuel consumption, and vehicular emissions. In addition, this project will improve the quality of life of Ithaca residents and visitors by supporting infill development that offers affordable and accessible options to access recreational trails, food markets, and the Cayuga Medical Center.

Beyond embracing best practices such as Complete Streets, the City is also aiming to leverage innovative
financing strategies such as its new Opportunity Zone designations, property tax incentives, and the Sidewalk Improvement District program to further bolster redevelopment and reinvestment. With regional transportation, educational, economic, community, and governmental partnerships, the City is ready to effectively plan the Route 13 Corridor upgrade. In addition, the City is working with New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to relocate a snow plowing and road salt storage facility to open up and reactivate a key waterfront site for private mixed-use development. The City is eager to realize these exciting economic and recreational opportunities and will be providing a 50% match but needs DOT assistance to fulfill this potential and move forward.

I. Project Description

Ithaca is a major regional engine of economic growth. The small town is home to the largest university in the Ivy League (Cornell University), as well as nationally-recognized Ithaca College. Cornell University, one of the country’s top institutions of higher learning, helps to foster economic prosperity across the region, state, and nation through research that leads to emerging technologies and new businesses. The region’s tourist destinations also attract an estimated 843,000 visitors annually, with associated spending of $156 million. Safe, reliable, and efficient transportation access to and within Ithaca is critical to the area’s continued productivity and success.

Route 13 is a four-lane highway that splits the Northside neighborhood and downtown Ithaca to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. Given the speed of vehicles and lack of infrastructure to support pedestrians and cyclists, this part of Route 13, from Cascadilla Street up to Fall Creek, is a significant obstacle and hazard to waterfront revitalization around the Ithaca Marina, Ithaca Farmers Market, Ithaca Community Gardens, and the incoming Cayuga Medical Center. To reinvest in the waterfront, Ithaca needs to enhance transportation safety, accessibility, and connectivity. The City has a bold concept and vision to transform a 0.85-mile segment of the limited-access Route 13 highway into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections with 3rd Street and Dey Street, clearly marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, the City intends to upgrade the Dey Street and 3rd Street intersections with Route 13 and extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront from the Northside neighborhood and create new access points to NYSDOT development site and Carpenter Business Park. This will alleviate traffic from 3rd Street while fostering new connections to incoming waterfront redevelopment. The City and its numerous regional and local partners seek BUILD Planning funds to design and engineer the Route 13 Corridor enhancements, including three key intersections and an extension of 5th Street to the Carpenter Business Park.

New redevelopment opportunities are lining up along the Cayuga Lake and north shore of the Cascadilla Creek waterfront, with over $75 million of new projects underway. This will include new public spaces for recreation, an expansion of the Ithaca Farmers Market, the preservation of 2.2 acres of Ithaca Community Gardens, an “Innovation District” in Cornell University warehouses for new entrepreneurs, new food markets, maker spaces, medical facilities, mixed-use development, and a comprehensive City Harbor revitalization. In addition, the City is expressly working with NYSDOT to relocate a snow plowing and road salt storage facility to reactivate a key waterfront site for mixed-use development. Ultimately, the project will increase accessibility
for multi-modal transportation options to connect to the waterfront trail, Ithaca Farmers Market, Ithaca Community Gardens, and the ALDI grocery store as well as spur new development including the only centrally-located medical center in Ithaca.

Below is the project area map providing a detailed visual representation of the Cayuga waterfront area and Route 13 Corridor.
Transportation Challenges

Hazardous Intersections for Pedestrians and Bicyclists: Ithaca’s sidewalks are narrow and do not effectively accommodate busy pedestrian and cyclist traffic. The intersections across Route 13, which functions as a 4-lane highway, are wide and unsafe to non-motorists. The Dey Street intersection also is adjacent to a railroad crossing which offers no more than a small island of sidewalk for pedestrians and cyclists. According to a 2017 Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council crash study, both the Dey Street and 3rd Street intersections ranked among 2 of the top 12 intersections in terms of crashes from 2012-2016 (see attached map and study).

Unsafe Route 13 Corridor: There are no sidewalks or bike lanes along Route 13 from Cascadilla Street to Dey Street (project area), yet the wide shoulders suggest that travel by foot or bicycle is possible, albeit unsafe. The 2017 Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council crash study also identified the road segments in the project area as having the highest number of crashes in all of central and downtown Ithaca from 2012-2016.

Threats to Bus Transit Reliability: Traffic congestion, degraded roadways and significant delays caused by the need for multiple left turns into oncoming traffic threaten the reliability of Ithaca’s bus service. These design and service flaws throw off schedules and make transit a less attractive option (especially for rural Tompkins County residents with longer commutes). In addition, key bus routes need intersection improvements, better sidewalks and transit stops, and other upgrades for transit riders. Poor reliability particularly threatens Ithaca’s low-income population as well as residents who do not own a car, as they have few options beyond bus transit. The Route 13 and Route 17 bus lines both face challenges with the Route 13 Corridor.

Lack of Transportation Choices on Route 13: While a significant portion of Ithaca’s population does take advantage of transit opportunities, residents and students have expressed the desire for expanded transportation alternatives such as biking and walking. At present, there are no bus routes that travel along the Route 13 Corridor directly – as the Route 13 and Route 17 bus lines only have perpendicular routes to the Corridor and make stops at the 3rd Street and Dey Street intersections.

Poor Connectivity with the Cayuga Waterfront: Route 13 effectively serves as a 5-lane obstacle for residents and visitors alike who want to visit the Cayuga waterfront, Ithaca Farmers Market, Ithaca Community Gardens, or other facilities from the Northside neighborhood, Cornell University, Ithaca College, and Downtown Ithaca. At present, there are only two intersections, Dey and 3rd Streets, that traverse Route 13, and only 3rd Street connects pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles to the waterfront area. This will be an even greater challenge as new investments come to
the Carpenter Business Park, warehouse area, and former NYSDOT facility site and demand increases. Living without a vehicle is difficult in Ithaca (and particularly rural Tompkins County) due to the community’s disconnected transportation system. Intra- and inter-city travel is challenging with the current transportation options. As a result of economic and transportation factors, no vehicles are available to 33.3% of Ithaca’s population and 14.7% of Tompkins County’s occupied housing units, compared to 8.8% nationwide. Better connectivity will improve access across the community and region, enable low-income households to reduce their transportation costs, and improve the attractiveness of the area for business retention and expansion.

**Impediment to Economic Growth:** Ithaca seeks to transform its Cayuga waterfront with new retail, mixed-use development, mixed-income housing, innovative new businesses, and an ever-expanding farmers market. Ithaca’s Comprehensive Plan fully recognizes the potential of the waterfront and affirms that a primary goal for the community is to “transform the Route 13 limited-access corridor into a Complete Street urban boulevard to reconnect the city with its Cayuga Lake waterfront and stimulate economic development.” With the NYSDOT site, Carpenter Business Park, warehouse facilities, and potentially the fuel station in between the NYSDOT and Carpenter Business Park sites all transitioning to new and better uses, now is the time to redesign and reconstruct Route 13 into an efficient, accessible, and safe roadway that encourages new development in the Cayuga waterfront area. Extending 5th Street across Route 13 to connect to the waterfront will not only create new access points, but add another intersection to Route 13 to better control and manage traffic flows.

**Project Outcomes**

**Safe Intersections for Pedestrians and Bicyclists:** BUILD Planning funding will help Ithaca redesign enhanced 3rd Street and Dey Street intersections to better support multi-modal users and reduce crashes and conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Improved signals, signage, landscaped buffers, and a range of others Complete Street and traffic calming strategies will be evaluated to best fit each intersection.

**Safer and Calmer Route 13 Corridor:** BUILD Planning funding will enable Ithaca to transform Route 13 into a Complete Street from Cascadilla Street to Dey Street, more effectively utilizing the shoulder space, turning lanes, and other wide lanes to better manage traffic flows while allowing for other non-motorized users as appropriate. Adding a new intersection with the extension of 5th Street will reduce continuous traffic speeds, allow for new crossings that do not strand pedestrians and cyclists in the middle of the busy...
corridor, and reduce stress factors at the 3rd Street intersection for residents and visitors seeking to access the Cayuga waterfront.

**Multi-Modal Transportation Choices on Route 13:** BUILD Planning funding will support the redesigning of the Route 13 Corridor to allow Tompkins County Area Transit and the City to consider how a bus line can provide service directly along the Route 13 Corridor. In addition, redesigning Route 13 to accommodate bicycle lanes and Complete Street buffers will provide a safe and direct way for cyclists and pedestrians to navigate the community.

**Connectivity with the Cayuga Waterfront:** BUILD Planning funding will specifically support the study and design of the extension of 5th Street to stretch across Route 13 and over to the 3rd Street extension and 3rd Street adjacent to the NYSDOT facility and Carpenter Business Park. This will effectively double the access points to the waterfront and the surrounding economic activity, increasing efficiency, quality of life, safety, connectivity, accessibility, choice, and economic opportunities.

In addition, BUILD funding will enable rural residents to both live in the countryside and take advantage of employment opportunities in the urban core and waterfront by increasing pedestrian and transit accessibility once in the city without a private vehicle. Investments in transit, pedestrian crossings, and bicycle facilities will help improve air quality, reduce fuel consumption and vehicle miles traveled, and decrease stormwater runoff. Encouraging more walking and cycling will also encourage residents and visitors alike to access fresh, healthy food choices at the Ithaca Farmers Market, make use of the Cayuga Waterfront Trail, explore the Ithaca Community Gardens, and be more active by biking and walking to more destinations in the community.

**Project History & Context**

The City’s Comprehensive Plan “Plan Ithaca” is clear about the direction of the Cayuga waterfront, as are recent economic trends (see attached excerpts from Plan Ithaca). As noted above, in the recently approved Comprehensive Plan, a key goal is to “transform the Route 13 limited-access corridor into a Complete Street urban boulevard to reconnect the city with its Cayuga Lake waterfront and stimulate economic development.”

Ithaca is poised for new development on a 7.6-acre waterfront site. The City successfully expanded the eligibility area for its Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program on July 5, 2018 to extend financial incentives to stimulate targeted reinvestment and redevelopment west of Route 13. Already, new economic opportunities are presenting themselves, but the City does not have the resources to effectively plan and design an upgraded Route 13 Corridor and 5th Street extension road capable of meeting the growing demands of the Cayuga waterfront.
To make matters worse, Ithaca grasps its transportation system challenges but struggles to make the necessary improvements. While the local transit provider does receive limited formula funding from Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the allocation is based upon population size rather than the system’s actual ridership. Ithaca, a top transit performer, receives as much FTA 5307 funding as do cities of similar size with the poorest ridership numbers. This lack of investment in Ithaca’s transportation system hinders downtown and regional economic development, slows the movement of people and goods, threatens tourism, endangers the community’s ability attract high-quality students and educators at Cornell University and Ithaca College, and increases pollution. Furthermore, continued transportation investment is difficult in Ithaca, as over 60% of its tax base is tax-exempt. New York State also recently adopted property tax caps that limit municipal levies. BUILD funding is necessary to help the City accelerate economic development and job growth.

Lastly, the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council crash study of 2017, which evaluated crash reports over the period of 2012-2016, added a particular urgency to address the unsafe Route 13 Corridor and 3rd Street and Dey Street intersections. Both the Dey Street and 3rd Street intersections ranked among 2 of the top 12 intersections in terms of crashes and the road segments in the project area have the highest number of crashes in all of central and downtown Ithaca from 2012-2016. See attached Tompkins County crash map.

DOT Secretary Elaine Chao has placed an emphasis on using federal transportation investment as a tool to help small and rural communities “improve infrastructure condition, address public health and safety, promote regional connectivity, or facilitate economic growth or competitiveness.” Ithaca’s proposed project will vastly upgrade two key intersections, expand transportation options along Route 13, extend 5th Street to connect to the waterfront to create a new safe access point to stimulate economic development, help residents improve the quality of their lives, and create pathways to expand the region’s middle class. Access to Cornell University, the area’s major employer, is critical for area residents. The next wave of economic activity in Ithaca is approaching rapidly in the Cayuga waterfront. Regionally, Ithaca has been and continues to be a major economic center of activity in New York. Improving access within Ithaca will help decrease commute times, improve the cost-competitiveness of moving workers and goods in the area, and spur further economic development. As the economy of Ithaca improves, residents across the Finger Lakes area will benefit from new job opportunities in the urban core and along the waterfront. BUILD investment will support regional rural towns and villages struggling with shrinking populations as a result of young adults chasing work in the cities.

The project will also have significant national implications. Cornell University conducts world-class research. Research activities at Cornell University attract an average of $350 million each year. The ideas that sprout at Cornell University take root in many industries. High-tech businesses, spawned by the research conducted at Cornell University, have already begun to proliferate in the Ithaca region and export products throughout the world, ranging from scientific knowledge to the most advanced nanotechnology. This important work has accelerated since 2011, when New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg selected Cornell University and its partner, the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology, to develop a $2 billion applied science and engineering center and startup incubator on Roosevelt Island in Manhattan. Opened in 2017, this satellite campus is directly challenging Silicon Valley for global technology talent. Ithaca seeks to capitalize on this economic asset by attracting entrepreneurs and investors to locate and grow businesses that commercialize the research that takes place at the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Technion-
Cornell Innovation Institute. Startup incubators and accelerators are already beginning to flourish in Ithaca in and around budding economic areas where people want to live, work, and play.

Proposed BUILD investment will help these new companies attract highly-skilled workers to the city. Young professionals and innovative entrepreneurs want to live in communities that are safe, livable, and sustainable. Transportation choice, affordability, vibrant neighborhoods, and environmental protection are important municipal tools to draw these families to the area. Creating a transportation system that enhances multi-modal mobility and improves quality of life within the community will be critical to achieving the City’s goal to be a national hub for technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

The economy of Ithaca is based on education (Cornell University, Ithaca College), with technology and tourism in supporting roles. Tompkins County’s economy has grown steadily from about 17,000 private sector jobs in 1960 to 59,300 in 2013. During the same period, the local economy experienced significant restructuring, with services (including higher education, health, and technology) replacing traditional manufacturing as the dominant sector. Advanced technology and electronics represent rapidly growing segments of Ithaca’s economic picture. BUILD investment serves all of the Ithaca business community’s needs. Improved movement of workers and goods across town helps to reduce costs and inefficiencies. In 2016, the City completed a $15.3 million reconstruction of a downtown pedestrian-zone that serves as the bus system’s transit hub. The intermodal facility enables bus riders from across the region (including many rural commuters) to connect to employment centers, educational opportunities, cultural activities, and other civic enterprises. BUILD funds will improve one of Ithaca’s most used and most unsafe central corridors, boosting multi-modal connectivity, reducing transportation hazards, and stimulating new economic output.

II. Project Location

Ithaca is a compact, dense community with 5,570.5 people per square mile, which is significantly higher than the state’s population density of 411.2 people per square mile and the national population density of 87.4 people per square mile. The city’s housing stock is older, with 45.4% of housing units built before 1940. As such, Ithaca’s modern transportation system has been constrained by the city’s former development patterns. The proposed project is located within the small Ithaca Urbanized Area, as designated by the U.S. Census Bureau. The larger project area – rural Tompkins County – has a population of 102,793, with 38,986 households. Tompkins County’s population is older than Ithaca’s (30.4 median age compared to 21.8). A small amount of suburban development surrounds Ithaca, but the landscape quickly changes to a rural development pattern with farmlands, woodlands, lakes, and a scattering of villages and hamlets.
Ithaca is more than 220 miles away from New York City, resembling the small-town character of northern Pennsylvania more than the Big Apple.

The project itself is located with a northeastern Route 13 terminus of 42.451600, -76.503369 and a southwestern terminus of 42.444302, -76.510020. The project area is in the west-central part of the City, along the east side of the Cayuga waterfront, and will be almost exclusively located in Census Tract 36109000800, which is a federally-designated Opportunity Zone, with the northeastern project area crossing into Census Tract 36109000700. See the dark green census tract located in the center of the map for the highlighted Opportunity Zone/Tract 3619000800.

This Route 13 Corridor project will benefit a wide range of transportation users in Ithaca. A third (33.3%) of households in Ithaca do not own a vehicle, more than 18% higher than the Tompkins County rate and 24.5% higher than the national rate. These residents rely on other modes of transportation to work, study, live, eat, shop, and play. Safe and accessible multi-modal corridors are vital to provide options for those without a private vehicle. Less than 38% of Ithaca residents commute by car, truck, van, or carpool, while almost 55% of residents commute by walking, biking, or public transit to access jobs, restaurants, classrooms, and new opportunities. Prominent destinations, from the Ithaca Farmers Market to the waterfront itself, are located beyond the Route 13 Corridor (see attached project area map). This rate of commuting by walking, biking, and public transit vastly exceeds the Tompkins County rate of 22.9% and the national rate of 9.6%. This project will help improve traffic and improve vehicular access while enhancing safe multi-modal options for over half of Ithaca’s residents who do not depend on cars. Lastly, upgrading the Route 13 Corridor will increase access and mobility options for the 5.9% of Ithaca’s residents who are disabled, increasing opportunities to safely access and explore Ithaca’s waterfront.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 2013-2017, Ithaca struggles with serious income inequality and economic disparities. The per capita income for Ithaca is $18,985, significantly less than levels in Tompkins County ($29,759), New York ($35,752), and the United States ($31,177). Approximately two-thirds of Ithaca’s households live below the national median household income level. Virtually the entire project falls within Census Tract 36109000800 in Ithaca, which includes the waterfront area and the Northside neighborhood. According to the U.S. EDA’s StatsAmerica tool, of the 1,116 housing units in this Census Tract, 59.7% are renter occupied, compared to only 31.8% nationally. Moreover, 29.0% of residents live in poverty, compared to only 14.6% nationally. As a result of economic and transportation factors,
no vehicles are available to 33.3% of Ithaca’s population and 14.7% of Tompkins County’s housing units, compared to 8.8% nationwide.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>American Community Survey 2013-2017</th>
<th>City of Ithaca</th>
<th>Tompkins County</th>
<th>New York</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
<td>$18,985</td>
<td>$29,759</td>
<td>$35,752</td>
<td>$31,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$31,967</td>
<td>$56,200</td>
<td>$62,765</td>
<td>$57,652</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Vehicles in Household</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commute by Car, Truck, or Van</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>61.3%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transit</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walk to Work</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Persons</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ithaca is well-connected to the region by State Routes 79, 13, and 96 and is only 6 miles from the Ithaca-Tompkins Regional Airport. Ithaca has a robust public transit network. The Ithaca region is one of the nation’s top users of transit. Ithaca’s bus transit system operates 34 routes, 22 hours a day, and 360 days a year. Tompkins County Area Transit is known for being a “small-town bus system with big-city service.” Route 13 and Route 17 are the two bus routes that serve the project area. A map of the 4 downtown routes, 4 Cornell routes, 6, suburb routes, and 2 evening routes is attached. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 12.8% of Ithaca’s population depends on bus transit to make their daily commute, compared with 5.1% nationally.

III. Grant Funds and Sources/Uses of Project Funds

Ithaca requests $1,372,533 in DOT BUILD funding to support comprehensive planning for multimodal accessibility and connectivity along Route 13 to the Cayuga waterfront, including the redesign and reconstruction of three intersections with Route 13. The estimated construction cost ($10.98 million) is based on NYSDOT per lane and per mile calculations. This BUILD grant request of $1,372,533 would thoroughly prepare Ithaca for construction. Full design was estimated at 25% of total construction cost, but Ithaca needs DOT support to design and engineer prior to pursuing additional funding from external and regional partners for construction. Ithaca is committed to match BUILD funds with $1,372,533 in non-federal money, which represents 50% of the total planning project. Ithaca encloses a letter of commitment for these matching funds. See the following detailed budget below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Component</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>BUILD Request</th>
<th>Other Federal Support</th>
<th>Matching Funds</th>
<th>Match Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Route 13 Corridor Design</td>
<td>$1,759,130 (64.1%)</td>
<td>$879,565 (32.05%)</td>
<td>$0 (0%)</td>
<td>$879,565 (32.05%)</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Street Extension Design</td>
<td>$735,936 (26.8%)</td>
<td>$367,968 (13.4%)</td>
<td>$0 (0%)</td>
<td>$367,968 (13.4%)</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersection Improvement Design</td>
<td>$250,000 (9.1%)</td>
<td>$125,000 (4.55%)</td>
<td>$0 (0%)</td>
<td>$125,000 (4.55%)</td>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Subtotal Costs</td>
<td>$2,745,066 (100.0%)</td>
<td>$1,372,533 (50%)</td>
<td>$0 (0%)</td>
<td>$1,372,533 (50%)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Project Cost | $2,745,066 |
| Total Local Match  | $1,372,533 |
| BUILD Funds Requested | $1,372,533 |

Percent of Local Match in Project | 50%
Percent of BUILD Funds in Project | 50%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATCH BREAKDOWN</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
<th>% OF TOTAL PROJECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Ithaca Local Funds</td>
<td>$1,372,533</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Local Match</td>
<td>$1,372,533</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All matching funds are available and secured for implementing this project.
IV. Selection Criteria

1. Primary Section Criteria

A. Safety

Improving safety for all users is a key goal of the Ithaca BUILD Planning project. The project will improve safety by effectively redirecting traffic flows with improved intersections, clear crosswalks, designated pedestrian and bicycle intersections, and improved signage. Ithaca intends to redesign and improve the 3rd Street and Dey Street intersections to better support pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Ithaca’s sidewalks are narrow and do not effectively accommodate busy foot traffic and intersections across Route 13, which functions as a 4-lane highway. Seeing as 3rd Street is the only road into the Cayuga waterfront area, traffic can bottleneck and different types of users come into conflict, resulting in injuries, deaths, and property damage. While pedestrians and cyclists can access the Cayuga Waterfront Trail in other places, those access points are at least a half mile in either direction along Route 13, and there are no pedestrian and bicycle facilities along the Route 13 Corridor. The Dey Street intersection also is adjacent to a railroad crossing which offers no more than a small “island” of sidewalk for pedestrians and cyclists to wait between train and highway when a train is approaching.

According to a 2017 Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council crash study, both the Dey Street and 3rd Street intersections ranked among 2 of the top 12 intersections in terms of crashes from 2012-2016 (see attached map and study). These intersections have each been host to between 76-100 crashes from 2012-2016. Seeing as the 5th Street Extension is proposed in this project and does not cross Route 13 currently, there is no crash data because there is no intersection. There are no sidewalks or bike lanes along Route 13 from Cascadilla Street to Dey Street, yet the wide shoulders suggest that travel by foot or bicycle is possible, albeit unsafe. The 2017 Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council crash study also identified the road segments in the project area as having the highest number of crashes in all of central and downtown Ithaca from 2012-2016, with between 21-40 crashes in the segment from Cascadilla Street to 3rd Street and between 11-20 crashes from 3rd Street to Dey Street. Moreover, the New York State Traffic Data Viewer reports that Route 13 traffic volumes in the project area exceed 32,000 vehicles per day, the second highest traffic count segment in the entire Tompkins County. This daily usage is expected to grow even more as the Cayuga waterfront area transforms from static NYSDOT facilities and underutilized warehouses into vibrant, active mixed-use development, the Cayuga Medical Center, restaurants, and entrepreneur

![Figure 8. A pedestrian was killed in the project corridor in 2018](image_url)
spaces. A reactivated waterfront is an excellent community asset – so long as the transportation infrastructure can safely handle increased usage and demand from motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

This project will enable Ithaca to transform Route 13 into a Complete Street from Cascadilla Street to Dey Street, redesigning the extensive shoulder space, turning lanes, and wide lanes to better manage traffic flows while allowing for other non-motorized users as appropriate and safe. Adding a new intersection with the extension of 5th Street will reduce continuous traffic speeds, allow for new crossings that do notstrand pedestrians and cyclists in the middle of the busy corridor, and reduce stress factors at the 3rd Street intersection for residents and visitors seeking to access the Cayuga waterfront. Complete Streets are proven strategies for reducing speed, redirecting traffic flows safely, and offering safe multi-modal transportation connections. More consistent lighting, landscaping, and signage will also alleviate conflicts and better direct motorized and non-motorized users through the corridor, particularly pedestrians walking across Route 13. Landscape buffers in intersections and throughout Route 13 between motorized and non-motorized users and textured crosswalks will also help Ithaca reduce conflicts between users of different modes of traffic.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Ithaca residents currently walk to work in record numbers – thus, safe sidewalks, clear crosswalks, landscaped buffers, and effective signals are a necessity. This is especially true as more Ithaca residents and visitors frequent the growing economic activity along the Cayuga waterfront, the local trails, the Ithaca Farmers Market, Ithaca Community Gardens, and other prospective developments. In fact, less than 58% of Ithaca residents commute by car, truck, van, or carpool, while almost 55% of residents commute by walking or public transit to access jobs, restaurants, classrooms, and new opportunities. Prominent destinations, from the Ithaca Farmers Market to the waterfront itself, are located beyond the Route 13 Corridor (see attached project area map). This rate of commuting by walking and public transit vastly exceeds the Tompkins County rate of 20.7% and the national rate of just 7.8%. This project will help improve traffic and improve vehicular access while enhancing safe multi-modal options for over half of Ithaca’s residents who depend on modes other than a private vehicle to commute. Lastly, upgrading the Route 13 Corridor will increase access and mobility options for the 5.9% of Ithaca’s residents who are disabled, increasing opportunities to safely access and explore Ithaca’s waterfront.

These improvements will reduce falls, accidents, injuries, and lawsuits. To date, Ithaca has received numerous reports of injuries and has paid out thousands of dollars in claims against the City. Many more injuries are not reported to the City. As conditions continue to deteriorate, the City expects that injuries will increase and lawsuits will rise as well. The proposed Complete Streets and streetscape improvements will make Ithaca’s streets safer for pedestrians and bicyclists, more accessible for those who are disabled, and a less hazardous experience for motorists.

B. State of Good Repair

The project will upgrade existing road infrastructure and improve key intersections to increase functionality, efficiency, and guidance for all users, which is not in a state of good repair currently.
The focus of the project is to redesign and ultimately reshape multi-modal traffic flows on the existing Route 13 Corridor and through key intersections that have become stress points for accidents and crashes. Signalization, streetscaping, and other intersection improvements will not only increase safety, but will upgrade the infrastructure to provide for a better functioning roadway. Even the new construction of the 5th Street Extension contributes to a state of good repair. The extension of this new road will reduce stresses on the 3rd Street intersection infrastructure and allow for traffic to flow through the Northside neighborhood more smoothly, complementing the 3rd Street intersection and providing much-needed redundancy of access to increase resilience when one of the intersections is shut down or obstructed to the Cayuga waterfront and Carpenter Business Park. In the event of a natural disaster, evacuation, or emergency, this planned redundancy will permit some modes of travel to endure when others are not possible and provide another option to access the Route 13 Corridor from Ithaca’s neighborhoods.

The Route 13 Corridor project is consistent with the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council’s 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan and supports the region’s goals of harmonizing and coordinating transportation investments and strategic land redevelopment. The Cayuga waterfront is one of the most underutilized areas in central New York, with great promise and many prospects underway. This BUILD Planning project will improve multi-modal connections between existing neighborhoods and unite those with critical economic reinvestment to stimulate the regional economy. The project will upgrade intersections and enable connections to public and private land that is not at its highest and best use currently. This project is also in accordance with the Tompkins County “Cayuga Lake Waterfront Plan” from 2004 and the “Northside Waterfront Access and Circulation Study” of 2008.

In addition, one of the goals of this BUILD Planning project is to evaluate how these improvements can improve operational cost efficiency and reduce life-cycle costs, as there are many opportunities to potentially streamline the functioning of the corridor and key intersections. Ithaca is now in its fifth year of its Sidewalk Improvement District program, which assesses fees to all property owners to capitalize a city-controlled fund to maintain and expand the sidewalk network. On average, the Sidewalk Improvement District program has generated approximately $640,000 per year. Thus far, in its first three years of existence, over 17,500 linear feet of sidewalk have been replaced or added, and the City intends to use these funds to provide locally-funded maintenance.

Unfortunately, as has been previously noted, the existing transportation infrastructure is an obstacle to new development and, according to Tompkins County Area Transit, the “current configuration does not support active and sustainable modes of transportation such as walking, biking, or transit.” This BUILD Planning project will redesign existing infrastructure to ensure it can meet present and future demands and is resilient and adaptable to shifting economic forces, mobility of goods, and regional efficiency. By upgrading this key corridor, these intersections, and implementing the 5th Street Extension, Ithaca will have a critical economic and transportation corridor enhanced to its highest and best use, while efficiently supporting and providing resilience for multi-modal users.

C. Economic Competitiveness

One of the most exciting aspects of this BUILD Planning project is that it will be directly complementing key new redevelopment opportunities that are lining up along the Cayuga Lake
and north shore of the Cascadilla Creek waterfront, with over $75 million of new projects underway. This Route 13 Corridor project will allow for coordinated public and private planning that will synchronize economic, land-use, and transportation planning for decades to come. This project vastly increases the economic productivity of the Cayuga waterfront area. Currently, the only public vehicle access point is by 3rd Street, which cuts off the community from a potentially vibrant, reactivated waterfront.

This BUILD Planning project will not only redesign the essential 3rd Street intersection to allow for and encourage multi-modal access, but will also plan the 5th Street Extension through Route 13 and into the Carpenter Business Park and connecting to the end of 3rd Street, reshaping traffic patterns to allow for visitors to the Ithaca Farmers Market, waterfront, ALDI supermarket, and Ithaca Community Gardens to enter through 3rd Street and construction vehicles, commercial vehicles, and other users to access the incoming Cayuga Medical Center, new mixed-use development like the City Harbor project being planned now, the Green Star Market and meeting space, and new housing options – and the hundreds of jobs related to all of this growth. Furthermore, the Dey Street intersection improvements will increase multi-modal access to the Ithaca Marina and Finger Lakes Boating Center, The Haunt (a popular local live music, events, and food venue), the Newman Municipal Golf Course, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, and City and County facilities. Most importantly, Organic Waterfront, LLC is planning its “City Harbor” project that will radically transform and update the north shore of Cascadilla Creek adjacent to the Finger Lakes Boating Center (see proposed site plan attached). This exciting development is in the planning stages and will include more than 76,000 square feet of new residential, event, and mixed-use space as well as many acres of new parking, stormwater parks, and landscaping. While the Cayuga Waterfront Trail connects to the main waterfront area, Dey Street/Willow Avenue is the only road access point to these destinations on the north side of Cascadilla Creek. This is the only road, in part, because of a railroad track parallel to Route 13 that prevents any other access for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike.

Improving access to the Cayuga waterfront also directly benefits rural communities and farmers. The Ithaca Farmers Market, which has been an economic anchor for three decades in the Cayuga waterfront, is comprised of a regional cooperative of 160 businesses that sell agricultural products within 30 miles of the market. Farmers in Tompkins County and the surrounding counties of...
Cayuga, Seneca, Cortland, Tioga, Chemung, and Schuyler bring their produce and products to the Ithaca Farmers Market. The Market at the Steamboat Landing location in the Cayuga waterfront brings together producers and consumers and is open Saturdays, Sundays, and Thursday nights, the latter of which was newly added due to increased popularity. Rural communities can access the market as well thanks to rural bus routes throughout Tompkins County, which connect residents to downtown Ithaca.

Harmonizing the transportation planning and infrastructure with current redevelopment planning, especially after the formal $22 million announcement by Governor Cuomo to relocate the NYSDOT facility on the waterfront, will allow the City, community, private businesses, County, and other interested stakeholders and land developers to create long-term efficiency in land-use, essential infrastructure needs, and the movement of a diverse set of workers, residents, and goods. Through the effective, coordinated redesign of a transportation corridor, this project serves and complements, rather than impedes, the Cayuga waterfront revitalization. Tompkins County has explicitly stated that “optimal development of the waterfront area in the city is a top priority.”

Although this is only a BUILD Planning project, there is much potential for waterfront growth on multiple sites in the Cayuga waterfront area. Ithaca firmly believes that the clear signal from DOT and the City’s partners that transportation reinvestment is coming soon and being effectively integrated with changing land-use, new multi-modal demands, and development trends will further stimulate and reinforce economic reinvestment interest in the waterfront. This will attract a range of jobs from commercial retail and the service industry to medical research and food sector innovation – both sectors that are less heavily weighted in Ithaca than the most dominant sector – educational, health, and social services, which comprises 49.8% of jobs in Ithaca and 45.5% of jobs in Tompkins County, compared to only 23.1% nationally.

The Cayuga waterfront economic revitalization is purposeful for the local, regional, and global economies. Ithaca realizes how pivotal it is to the economic success of the region, given that it is home to the largest Ivy League institution (Cornell University), Ithaca College, the Ithaca Farmers Market, and numerous other local and regional innovative enterprises. Ithaca is also well aware of its role in the global marketplace, where research and entrepreneurship are critical to the United States’ economy. Technological, agricultural, food, medical, and other innovation is essential to enabling Ithaca and the United States to compete with rapidly changing global market forces. The waterfront revitalization and transportation improvements described in this project will directly benefit incoming site development that will be home to new enterprises, innovation, and research in Ithaca’s growing “Innovation District.”

Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 Corridor and waterfront area is critical to the success of the Cayuga Health System’s project at the Carpenter Business Park. This project will create much needed housing and community medical services as well as jobs to this part of the City, the first medical center in central and downtown Ithaca. This BUILD Planning project will also complement Organic Waterfront’s new developments, including the expanded Green Star Cooperative Market that is moving to the site at 770 Cascadilla Street at the southern end of the project area and the City Harbor project that is in the planning stages at the northern end of the project area that will transform the marina, which will include a mix of restaurant, office space, housing, and public access to the waterfront. Safe and reliable access is critical to allowing these developments to advance. Furthermore, Ithaca’s proposed waterfront revitalization and
transportation improvements will also help Ithaca attract and retain entrepreneurs and investors to locate and grow businesses that commercialize the research that takes place at Cornell University’s Joan and Irwin Jacobs Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute. High-tech businesses, spawned by the research conducted at Cornell University, have already begun to proliferate in the Ithaca region. As a knowledge-based economy, Ithaca is dependent on attracting highly-skilled workers to the city. Ithaca understands that communities must provide transportation choices, affordability, strong neighborhoods, and environmental protection to compete for the best talent. Creating a transportation system that simplifies mobility, encourages new access points, and increases connectivity in a growing waterfront innovation area is the ideal way to meet the City’s goal to be a national hub for technology and innovation.

Ultimately, this transportation planning project and eventual construction will facilitate substantial new economic activity, increase property and land values, support job growth, vastly improve access to critical regional economic activity like the farmers market, the ALDI market, Green Star Cooperative Market, the City Harbor development, and the Cayuga Medical Center, and create a new economic hub in the Cayuga waterfront. BUILD Planning resources will help unlock and solidify economic interest in underdeveloped properties and the underutilized Cayuga Lake and Cascadilla Creek waterfronts that also coincide with local and regional goals and one of Ithaca’s federally-designated Opportunity Zones.

D. Environmental Sustainability

The Route 13 Corridor project will create new sidewalks and bicycle lanes where none previously existed and make the Corridor and key intersections safer for biking and walking. This will increase the already impressive number of residents who already use non-vehicular modes to commute to work. Complete Streets and pedestrian improvements will result in an increase in walking as an alternative to driving. Bike infrastructure will also result in an increase in biking as an alternative to driving over the next 20 years. Shifting trips in the city from single occupancy vehicles to transit, walking, and biking will significantly reduce fuel consumption. Those energy and fuel savings will generate reductions of carbon and other air pollutants.

Another important environmental benefit associated with this project is the reduction of hazardous pollutants resulting from reductions in vehicle miles traveled. The 5th Street Extension will create a new access road when none previously existed enabling users to more efficiently travel from downtown Ithaca, the Northside neighborhood, and anywhere connecting to Route 13 and access new

**Figure 10. New bike lanes on Route 13 will promote alternative transportation choices**
developments in the Cayuga waterfront and Carpenter Business Park that are south of 3rd Street. Moreover, increasing access to healthy, locally-sourced produce that is available and sold at the Ithaca Farmers Market regularly reduces emissions from the vehicles miles traveled for food.

DOT funding will leverage existing investments in mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the waterfront on previously developed land and will further concentrate infill development for more efficient land-use. Increased capacity of the transportation system will encourage private sector developers to site their projects in the urban core and Cayuga waterfront.

E. Quality of Life

Expanding Transportation Choices for Expected Users: Ithaca’s BUILD Planning project will increase transportation choices for a diverse group of expected and current users. First and foremost, this Route 13 Corridor project will directly support the third (33.3%) of households in Ithaca that do not own a vehicle, more than 18% higher than the Tompkins County rate and 24.5% higher than the national rate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. These residents depend on other modes of transportation to work, study, live, eat, shop, and play. Safe and accessible multi-modal corridors are vital to provide options for those without a private vehicle. Less than 38% of Ithaca residents commute by car, truck, van, or carpool, while almost 55% of residents commute by walking or public transit (which also involves walking) to access jobs, restaurants, classrooms, and new opportunities. Prominent destinations, from the Ithaca Farmers Market to the waterfront itself, are located beyond the Route 13 Corridor (see attached project area map). This rate of commuting by walking and public transit vastly exceeds the County rate of 20.7% and the national rate of 7.8%. This project will help improve traffic and improve vehicular access while enhancing safe multi-modal options for over half of Ithaca’s residents who depend on modes other than a private vehicle to commute.

According to AAA, owning and operating a car costs $8,469 per year. Providing transportation choices such as improved transit, better walkability, and bike lanes helps residents more easily to forgo owning a personal vehicle or operate without a personal vehicle, increasing local purchasing power. With a per capita income of just $18,985, which is only 63.8% of the Tompkins County per capita income and only 60.9% of the national per capita income, many residents in Ithaca are financially dependent on non-private vehicle transportation. In addition, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition’s “Out of Reach 2019”, the Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a two-bedroom apartment is $1,135 in 2019. In order to afford this level of rent and utilities, without paying more than 30% of income on housing, a household must earn $45,400 annually. Assuming a 40-hour work week, 52 weeks per year, this level of income translates into a housing wage of $21.83. For a two-bedroom apartment, a household must include 2.0 minimum wage earners working 40 hours per week year-round. Expanding safe multi-modal access through this project to the Cayuga waterfront is critical to improving the quality of life and affordability for Ithaca residents. Walking and biking should be commonplace in such a small college town with so much activity in such close proximity, but the poorly functioning, unsafe, and unattractive Route 13 corridor is not supporting walkability and livability for this community.

The Ithaca region is one of the nation’s top users of transit. Ithaca’s bus transit system, operates 34 routes, 22 hours a day, and 360 days a year. Tompkins County Area Transit is known for being a “small-town bus system with big-city service.” Route 13 and Route 17 are the two bus routes
that serve the project area. A map of the 4 downtown routes, 4 Cornell routes, 6 suburb routes, and 2 evening routes is attached. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 12.8% of Ithaca’s population depends on bus transit to make their daily commute, compared with 5.1% nationally. Exactly 6.5% of Tompkins County residents outside of Ithaca commute primarily by public transit as well, which is greater than the national rate. This includes many rural residents who depend on rural bus service that connects them to downtown Ithaca and waterfront activity. The proposed project will support transit ridership and accessibility to transit stops in the Route 13 Corridor.

This project will also help reduce congestion by encouraging additional mode shifts to walking, biking, and transit. This will support commercial manufacturers, developers, and businesses that need to ship goods through and around Ithaca. In addition, the project will support students of Cornell University and Ithaca College who often do not own a car and cannot fully access Ithaca’s downtown and waterfront areas because of limited transit and unsafe pedestrian and bicycle connections (or lack of connections altogether). Moreover, this planning project will offer more accessible and straightforward connections to tourists and visitors who are less familiar with the ins and outs of Ithaca neighborhoods. Given the limited and rather convoluted waterfront access at present and the growing number of destinations and public spaces in the Cayuga waterfront area, clearer signage and more reliable access will encourage more tourists to frequent the waterfront, park, and then walk around the area to shop, dine, and relax – supporting the local economy. Lastly, upgrading the Route 13 Corridor will increase access and mobility options for the 5.9% of Ithaca’s residents who are disabled, increasing opportunities to safely access and explore Ithaca’s waterfront. Additional transportation choices will also benefit seniors and persons with disabilities, as all improvements will meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

**Infill Development:** Ithaca is prioritizing waterfront infill development in an underutilized area. The NYSDOT facility that will be relocated will open up 7.6 acres of prime waterfront property for new private investment to generate business and support tourism adjacent to the Ithaca Farmers Market. This relocation has been years in the making, and the Governor and County recently announced that the funding and relocation have been confirmed. The NYSDOT facility will be relocated to a new 53-acre Airport Logistics Park in Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport property. The result is that this prime waterfront property will be able to complement 8.5 acres of infill mixed-use development in the Carpenter Business Park for the Cayuga Medical Center, housing, and amenities, the expansion of the Ithaca Farmers Market, the Ithaca Community Gardens, and the repurposing of the warehouses south of the Carpenter Business Park. The 5th Street Extension will be a transformational improvement allowing new routes of access to the business park and NYSDOT facility site.

In addition, Organic Waterfront, LLC is planning the “City Harbor” project...
that will reshape the north shore of Cascadilla Creek adjacent to the Finger Lakes Boating Center (see proposed site plan attached). This exciting development will include more than 76,000 square feet of new residential, event, and mixed-use retail and development space as well as many acres of stormwater parks and landscaping. While the Cayuga Waterfront Trail connects to the main waterfront area, Dey Street/Willow Avenue is the only road access point to these destinations on the north side of Cascadilla Creek. Thus, Dey Street intersection improvements will be essential to supporting the City Harbor redevelopment and the transit stops at that intersection as well.

DOT funding will leverage existing investments in mixed-use, transit-oriented development in the waterfront on previously developed land and will further concentrate infill development for more efficient land-use. Increased capacity of the multi-modal transportation system will encourage private sector developers to site their projects in the Cayuga waterfront.

**Improved Access to Civic, Recreational, Employment, and Medical Institutions:** The revitalization of the Cayuga waterfront has been years in the making and has been recently accelerated due to the promising NYSDOT facility relocation announcement, which will allow for new opportunities as well as expected economic benefits, as discussed previously. Redesigning the Route 13 Corridor project has vast potential to improve the quality of life by calming traffic and improving access to necessary services and goods along the Cayuga waterfront in Ithaca.

The Ithaca Farmers Market at the Steamboat Landing is a weekend staple in Ithaca, attracting residents and visitors from all around the Greater Ithaca-Tompkins region. The Cayuga Waterfront Trail is a public recreational amenity available to all to support fitness and outdoor activity in Ithaca. The ALDI supermarket is the only discount grocery store in the Northside or Fall Creek neighborhoods and is just across the Route 13 Corridor on 3rd Street. Most importantly, this project will provide new access to incoming medical facilities. Carpenter Business Park has been undeveloped for years, as the infrastructure and road network desperately need to be improved.

The mixed-use development would bring the first medical facility to downtown Ithaca. Currently, the only medical facility in the county is outside of the city and not sufficiently accessible because of the traffic congestion and road network in the city. The improvements to Route 13 and the 5th Street Extension are critical to welcoming this medical facility into the community. In the next decade, Ithaca and Tompkins County both expect the Cayuga waterfront to be a new hub of innovation, food, mixed-use development, and medical clinics. As a result, Ithaca expects hundreds of new jobs to be created at formerly undeveloped or underutilized sites, increasing traffic flow, user demand, and services. This BUILD Planning project is critical to effectively planning for and anticipating this vast economic transformation, and redesigning the Route 13 Corridor, 5th Street Extension, 3rd Street intersection, and Dey Street intersection are critical to the success of this underutilized waterfront and improving the quality of life of Ithaca and Tompkins County residents.

2. Secondary Selection Criteria
A. Innovation (Technology, Project Delivery, Financing)

**Innovative Technologies:** Ithaca is very familiar with innovative best practices in street redesign and transportation efficiency. A core component of the project is to transform the 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street to enhance safety and improve multi-modal efficiency.
The City will transform poorly functioning areas, implement streetscape improvements, and develop enhanced public transit facilities along Route 13 Corridor and at critical intersections. Wider sidewalks and other streetscape improvements will support transit, walking and biking. In addition, to improved system reliability, Ithaca has integrated intelligent transportation system (ITS) technologies into its transit operations. Tompkins County Area Transit has implemented three information technology improvements: an Automatic Vehicle Location system, a Real-Time Passenger Information system, and a scheduling system. These systems will enhance the passenger experience with real-time information for bus locations, schedule adherence, event data, and next bus predicted stop arrivals and will complement the planned streetscape and Complete Street upgrades, particularly at the 3rd Street and Dey Street intersections, where the Route 13 and Route 17 buses service the community.

**Innovative Project Delivery:** The City is open to innovative project delivery options for congestion management, operations, maintenance, permitting, and review. As this is a planning project, Ithaca would welcome DOT input for opportunities to streamline approval processes, contracting, and operations.

**Innovative Financing:** The Route 13 Corridor and Cayuga Waterfront project is well-positioned in Ithaca’s recently designated Opportunity Zone, where the City will be intentionally seeking to leverage this new tax incentive program, passed in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 last December. The potential for the Cayuga waterfront is great, and Ithaca is ready to combine local and federal dollars to leverage private redevelopment through Opportunity Funds over the next decade. The area is ripe for redevelopment with the adjacent Ithaca Farmers Market, waterfront trails, and nearby Cornell University, but transportation challenges inhibit these new opportunities and diminish the economic potential of the area. While this was by no means the only reason to invest in the waterfront and Route 13 Corridor, Opportunity Funds now offer both the City and DOT the ability to channel public dollars more effectively and the City is planning accordingly. New development will increase local tax revenues to support additional transportation infrastructure improvements.

The City also recently expanded the eligibility area for its Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program (CIITAP), which offers financial incentives to stimulate targeted reinvestment and redevelopment. On July 5th, 2018, Ithaca expanded the district to include the Cayuga waterfront area to the west of Route 13, including the underutilized warehouse sites and NYSDOT property. The CIITAP offers three incentives: 1) a sales tax exemption for eligible construction projects; 2) a partial mortgage recording tax exemption for eligible projects; and, 3) a declining-schedule partial tax abatement on the value of new improvements. The City expects these incentives will be able to effectively complement and leverage the City’s Opportunity Zone designation.

Lastly, the City intends to raise some of the required funding through its Sidewalk Improvement District program, which assesses fees to all property owners to capitalize a city-controlled fund to maintain and expand the sidewalk network. The City then competitively bids out sections for sidewalk replacement and expansion for the entire city. Thus far, over 17,500 linear feet of sidewalk have been replaced or added. On average, the SID has generated approximately $640,000 per year. Ithaca also has the option of supporting larger projects as well by capitalizing the project cost and using a portion of these funds as debt service. It is likely that part of the City’s funds for
eventual construction of this project will be from the Sidewalk Improvement District program. This flexible, impactful program provides the City with additional non-federal revenue to improve local infrastructure.

B. Partnership

This Ithaca BUILD project is based upon multiple years of master planning, transportation gap analyses, and community input. In addition, the City has been actively coordinating with Tompkins County and the NYSDOT facilities along the waterfront to enable new economic and community development adjacent to the thriving farmer’s market, Cornell University extension facilities, and Ithaca Community Gardens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Project Roles</th>
<th>Match</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Ithaca</td>
<td>In addition to being the applicant the provider of a cash over-match, the City is coordinating with multiple private, regional, and state entities to encourage new reinvestment and redevelopment along the waterfront. The City will be responsible for ensuring project completion.</td>
<td>$1,372,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tompkins County Area Transit</td>
<td>Will to dedicate staff time to work with City staff and others to determine how bus service can benefit new populations and offer more efficient service to existing riders, plan for good multimodal connections between transit and other modes.</td>
<td>In-Kind Staff Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council</td>
<td>Works with local municipalities to implement transportation programs in accordance with the 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan. Will coordinate with NYSDOT, who is a member of the council, to provide policy, process, and technical assistance to address the intersection of land-use patterns, transportation planning, and quality of life.</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability</td>
<td>Tompkins County strongly supports Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor waterfront area. Tompkins County created a Cayuga Lake Waterfront Plan in 2004 and a Northside Waterfront Access and Circulation Study in 2008. Key advocate in convincing New York State to move the NYSDOT facility from the waterfront, identifying an alternative site adjacent to the airport and making the case to the Governor’s office for the move.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tompkins County Area Development (TCAD)</td>
<td>Works to implement County Comprehensive Plan and support community partners in their planning efforts as the Cayuga waterfront continues to grow and the transportation enhancements are advanced.                                                                atories.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ithaca Farmers Market</td>
<td>Supports critical CMC project in the business park to create much needed housing and community medical services. TCAD is committed to delivering economic incentives to ensure that these projects are completed.</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional cooperative of 160 businesses that produce within 30 miles of the market. Key stakeholder and community</td>
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The City’s partners are excited for new waterfront improvements, reinvestment, and access and share a vision of the Cayuga waterfront as a hub for innovation, mixed-use development, recreation, and new economic opportunities, enhanced by fluid multi-modal connectivity. Ithaca’s transportation vision is closely coordinated with its economic development, housing, stormwater, arts and culture, and land use plans and policies. The project enjoys strong intergovernmental support from the County, State, and Congressional delegations. Tompkins County understands that a strong waterfront benefits the region and will produce area-wide economic growth. As Tompkins County Area Transit is a regional bus transit system, many of the multi-modal improvements planned with BUILD funding will complement bus service and encourage greater use and access to bus facilities. Regional economic entities, such as the Cayuga Medical Center, Park Grove Realty, Organic Waterfront, LLC, and the Tompkins County Area Development, are collaborating with the City and state to reinvest in the waterfront area. Ultimately, the project will demonstrate to small communities throughout the United States how coordinated land use and transportation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ithaca Community Gardens</td>
<td>Offers 150 community garden plots supporting gardeners in the Northside neighborhood across Route 13. Strong proponent of safety and accessibility to the community gardens for bicyclists and pedestrians.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organic Waterfront, LLC</td>
<td>Owner of ~12 acres of prime development land, the Green Star property, in the project area, which will be a turnkey lease for new developments. They are acquiring both warehouses in the Cornell Warehouse area to convert into a 100-space parking lot and a Green Star Market, complete with meeting space and small event space for cooking classes and other demonstrations. Also planning City Harbor project to bring more than 76,000 square feet of restaurants, office space, housing, and public access to the waterfront. Key stakeholder for accessibility and connectivity.</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cayuga Medical Center (CMC)</td>
<td>CMC owns parcels in the Carpenter Business Park and is partnering with Park Grove Realty to develop a mixed-use development with Cayuga Medical Center as the anchor entity and first medical center to downtown Ithaca with amenities, housing, and specialty clinics. 5th Street Extension would further open up site access. Key stakeholder for accessibility and connectivity.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Grove Realty</td>
<td>Developer of 8.5-acre site owned by CMC in the Carpenter Business Park. Key stakeholder for accessibility and connectivity.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York State Department of Transportation</td>
<td>NYSDOT owns facilities, office space, and equipment storage space along the waterfront. Governor Cuomo announced in May 2018 that the state would be relocating these facilities near the Tompkins County Airport to open up space for economic reinvestment. 5th Street Extension would open up site access for diverse opportunities. See attached press release.</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>
policies that encourage high-density, mixed-use development in waterfront and concentrated areas, combined with aggressive support for transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities, can transform a region and bolster economic opportunity. See attached letters of support for more information.

Ithaca’s proposed BUILD project will leverage the City’s revitalization of its downtown Commons pedestrian mall as a central transportation hub, supported with a $4.5 million FTA State of Good Repair grant and a $1.8 million New York State Regional Economic Development Council grant. BUILD investment will also leverage Ithaca’s recently completed integration of ITS technologies into its bus transit operations.

V. Project Readiness
A. Technical Feasibility

The sponsor of this project is the City of Ithaca, New York. The City has demonstrated its ability to hire professional firms and contractors, acquire property and otherwise advance projects in compliance with federal and state laws through various projects included on the Transportation Improvement Program in the past ten years or more, be they bridge, highway, or road infrastructure enhancement projects.

The current City engineering staff has successfully managed over $30 million of federal-aid transportation projects, including right-of-way acquisition, railroad negotiation, and all aspects of planning (scoping, preliminary design, detailed design, construction, inspection). Ithaca has an exemplary record of managing federal grants, having received numerous DOT, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other federal grants over the years. Key to this effort is the development of a detailed work plan with clear milestones and responsibilities. Performance measures will be established in order to track progress. Ithaca has never been cited for an adverse OMB Circular A-133 audit finding, and has never been required to comply with “high risk” terms or conditions under OMB Circular A-102.

The City employees 4 engineers, including a dedicated bridge engineer, experienced with administering federal funds and managing federal aid transportation projects. Key City staff to be involved in administering this project are: Tim Logue, Director of Engineering, with support as needed from Addisu Gebre, Bridge Systems Engineer, Eric Hathaway, City Transportation Engineer and Kent Johnson, Transportation Engineer. The preliminary cost estimate that is the basis for the planning and design project developed by the engineering team was based on NYSDOT construction cost estimates, inflated at 2.25% per year to 2026, for urban highway reconstruction of Route 13 and for the new construction of the 5th Street Extension construction in costs per lane mile. The team is familiar with typical cost estimates for other components of the project, including new and improved traffic signals at 5th and 3rd Streets respectively, railroad crossing infrastructure at the 5th Street Extension, and related landscaping, enclosed drainage, curbs, sidewalks, utilities, a 10-foot tree lawn, and curbed median along Route 13. Ultimately, as this is a planning project, these estimates and features will serve as a guide for the selected contractors to develop a robust corridor plan with the three intersection enhancements.

Mr. Logue has experience administering federal-aid projects, including TIP and TEP projects. He has been the project manager for the Collegetown Traffic Signal Upgrade (PIN 375540), the Floral

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Avenue Multi-use Facility (PIN 375463), the Intersection Bulb-outs on Green and Seneca Street (PIN 375462), the Cayuga Waterfront Trail (PINs 395047 & 395024), the Route 13 Pedestrian Crossings at Third & Dey Streets (PIN 395035), and Traffic Signal Upgrade – Phase 2 (PIN 375464). He has worked for the City of Ithaca since 2000, holds a Masters in City and Regional Planning degree from Cornell University and became the City Transportation Engineer in July 2005. Mr. Gebre has experience administering Federal-Aid Projects such as TIP and TEP projects. He is currently the project manager for a Transportation Improvement Program project (Rehabilitation of Lake Street Bridge Project - PIN 375534) and a City-funded project (Replacement of Brindley Street Bridge Project - CP#764). He was project manager for the following Transportation Enhancement Projects: Rehabilitation of Columbia Street Pedestrian Bridge Project (PIN 395042) and E. Clinton Street Replacement and Reconstruction of Prospect Street Reconstruction Project (PIN 375457). He has worked for the City since 2009 and holds a Masters of Engineering degree in Engineering Management from Cornell University. He has been the Director of Engineering since 2015. Kent Johnson’s work focuses on pedestrian, bicycle and transit transportation systems.

Ithaca is fully prepared to manage the costs of this Route 13 Corridor & Cayuga Waterfront Revitalization Project and to support the project budget submitted with this application. Ithaca is committed to providing an over-match of 50% for the BUILD Planning application, and Ithaca has a solid track record of delivering on its commitments. The City’s overall financial condition is in very good shape. Ithaca has an Aa2 credit rating. Furthermore, planned and proposed development in the community is expected to strengthen the City’s local revenues. Below is a detailed statement of work for Ithaca’s BUILD Planning project:

1. **Project Preparation**
   - Partnership Agreement: Confirm local and regional stakeholder support.
   - Funding Agreement: Upon notice of BUILD award, expeditiously coordinate with the DOT to process agreement and prepare for planning.

2. **Procurement**
   - Prepare bid solicitation and competitively solicit the bid for the design and engineering project.
   - Select the contractor and confirm the overall design team, including city and county officials.

3. **Planning & Design**
   - Develop design and engineering scope of work for key intersections, 5th Street Extension, and Route 13 Corridor.
   - Update corridor and intersection analyses to consider current and future stress factors, user conflicts, and mode switches.
   - Develop alternative options for 5th Street Extension and design alternatives for effective intersection enhancements.
4. **Community Engagement**
   - Communicate project intentions, impacts, and plans to residents and local businesses through community forums and public meetings to seek feedback.
   - Share progress by posting project updates on City website.

5. **Complete Design and Engineering**
   - Share final project with DOT, the community, and other project partners.
   - Prepare for permitting and other approvals based upon final designs.

**B. Project Schedule**

Ithaca’s team has determined that the Route 13 project schedule will begin in February 2020 and proceed expeditiously toward completion well in advance of September 30, 2021. This includes:

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<tr>
<th>Project Phase</th>
<th>2020</th>
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<td>Q1</td>
<td>Q2</td>
<td>Q3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding Agreement with DOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning &amp; Design</td>
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<td>Procurement Preparation and Bid Solicitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Select Contractor &amp; Confirm Design Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop Design &amp; Engineering Scope</td>
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<tr>
<td>Update Corridor and Intersections Analyses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of Alternatives Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Host Community Forums to Share Early Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete Design &amp; Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seek Local Approvals on Completed Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seek State &amp; Regional Approvals (including permitting, NEPA/106)</td>
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As the project is based upon a strong partnership between the City, Tompkins County Area Transit, Tompkins County, the NYSDOT, and many other local and regional stakeholders, Ithaca is confident that it can proceed on this schedule, begin the project expeditiously upon grant award and agreement, and complete design to prepare for permitting and construction.
C. Required Approvals
   1. Environmental Permits and Reviews
      a. NEPA Status

No environmental clearance is required for this Build Planning project along the Route 13 Corridor and at the identified intersections. Upon completion of design and engineering, when Ithaca is ready to construct, it will pursue any required environmental clearance. That said, this project is predominantly an upgrade to an existing Route 13 Corridor, and but for the 5th Street Extension, the project is intended to improve functionality on existing infrastructure.

b. Approvals and Reviews

No additional reviews are necessary to initiate planning on the Route 13 Corridor. The project poses no risk to cultural or environmental resources at this stage. Ithaca will consider pursuing a NEPA Categorical Exclusion depending on the final plan and design of the 5th Street Extension. The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will need to confirm that no historic resources will be affected and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will need to confirm that no rare or endangered species are likely to be harmed by Ithaca’s future development.

c. Environment Studies or Other Documents

No environmental studies are necessary to begin and complete planning.

d. Discussions with DOT Offices on NEPA and Environmental Reviews

NEPA discussions are not needed at this stage for a Planning project.

e. Public Engagement

Ithaca has incorporated community and stakeholder engagement into its project schedule to ensure that there is robust public engagement, including through design charrettes, public workshops, and public meetings that can produce a strong community consensus on the ultimate plans. The City just completed a waterfront neighborhood land use plan and revised to support new investment in the project area. This plan was guided by a 17-person working group composed of stakeholders and a cross-section of community residents.

As evidenced by the attached letters of support, there has already been a strong effort to engage with local and regional stakeholders well in advance of the start of planning. The Opportunity Zone designation further cemented the interest that the community has in seeing redevelopment and infrastructure improvements along Route 13, around the Ithaca Farmers Market, and in the Carpenter Business Park. According to the Tompkins County Legislature, access to the waterfront is enormously desirable, and with the improvements under consideration, the area will be walkable for most city residents. Tompkins County created a Cayuga Lake Waterfront Plan in 2004 and a Northside Waterfront Access and Circulation Study in 2008. Further, the County has already been instrumental in convincing New York State to relocate the NYSDOT residency from the waterfront, identifying an alternative site adjacent to the regional airport and making the case to
the Governor’s office for the move. Optimal development of the waterfront area in the city is a top priority for the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County.

2. State and Local Approvals

Ithaca’s proposed multi-modal Route 13 planning project helps to achieve the goals of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council’s publicly-supported regional 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. The 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan seeks to develop an integrated transportation system that is seamless, multimodal and coordinated to achieve greater operational efficiencies and increase the safety and convenience of users. A key objective of the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan is to “improve the existing road network to safely accommodate bicycling, pedestrian and transit uses.” The proposed improvements are also envisioned in the Downtown Ithaca Alliance’s 2020 Downtown Strategic Plan. Among its “big ideas” are the development of transit corridors between downtown and Cornell University, as well as widening sidewalks to allow for better pedestrian movement.

This project also addresses one of the primary recommendations of the City’s recently adopted Comprehensive Plan “Plan Ithaca”, which is to “transform the Route 13 limited-access corridor into a Complete Street urban boulevard to reconnect the city with its Cayuga Lake waterfront and stimulate economic development.”

As this is a planning project, no state and local approvals are required at this time.

3. Federal Transportation Requirements Affecting State and Local Planning

The Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council’s Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) will be amended to include the Route 13 Corridor and 5th Street extension improvements immediately upon BUILD award.

D. Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

Ithaca’s BUILD planning project is both timely and low-risk. The City has been preparing for planning and the funding gap was its main concern. BUILD funds would alleviate that gap and allow the planning to proceed to evaluate the challenges, opportunities, and alternative options. Ithaca is fully prepared to manage the costs of this Route 13 Corridor & Cayuga Waterfront Revitalization Project and to support the project budget submitted with this application. Ithaca is committed to providing an over-match of 50% for the BUILD Planning application, and Ithaca has a solid track record of delivering on its commitments. The City’s overall financial condition is in very good shape. Ithaca has an Aa2 credit rating. Furthermore, planned and proposed development in the community is expected to strengthen the City’s local revenues. Ithaca has never been cited for an adverse OMB Circular A-133 audit finding and has never been required to comply with “high risk” terms or conditions under OMB Circular A-102.

As noted previously, the City employees 4 engineers, including a dedicated bridge engineer, experienced with administering federal funds and managing federal aid transportation projects, and is well-prepared to proceed with this planning project. The team has a range of experience administering federal-aid projects, including TIP and TEP projects, and has worked hard to
cultivate relationships with public, private, academic, non-profit, and business partners in the community.

One concern was the timing of the relocation of NYSDOT facilities from the site south of the Ithaca Farmers Market, but since Governor Andrew Cuomo’s May 3, 2018 announcement of $22 million to fund the airport redevelopment, a new 53-acre Airport Logistics Park, and relocation of the DOT facilities, the City of Ithaca is excited and poised to prepare for new development on the 7.6-acre waterfront site. The City intends to closely monitor the preparations so as to coordinate with the County and State for effectively advancing waterfront opportunities. See attached press release for additional details.

The City was also concerned about its ability to provide longer-term financing capabilities to encourage waterfront revitalization and redevelopment, and although that is not part of this planning grant, the City successfully expanded the eligibility area for its Community Investment Incentive Tax Abatement Program at July 5th, 2018 to extend financial incentives to stimulate targeted reinvestment and redevelopment west of Route 13.

VI. Benefit-Cost Analysis

A BCA consistent with DOT guidelines is not required for a BUILD Planning project, though the Ithaca team expects significant economic, safety, environmental quality of life benefits as the planning process continues and once construction is ultimately complete. The project is expected to reduce travel time and improve mobility for all users, enhance safety along the Route 13 Corridor, reduce emissions as a result of decreased idling and mode switching, increase property values, and encourage new waterfront residential and commercial development.
SUPPORT LETTERS

1. Mayor Svante Myrick, City of Ithaca
   (match funding commitment)

2. The Honorable Tom Reed, Congressman, NY-22

3. Cayuga Medical Center
   (owner of 8.5 acre prime parcel and future anchor tenant for a mixed-use project in project area)

4. Ithaca Farmers Market
   (operator of 125-vendor farmers market located on the Cayuga Lake waterfront)

5. Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council
   (MPO)

6. Ithaca Community Gardens
   (operator of 120-member community gardens located in project area)

7. Park Grove Realty
   (designated developer for Cayuga Medical Center’s 8.5 acre parcel in the project area)

8. Martha Robertson, Chair, Tompkins County Legislature

9. Jason Molino, Tompkins County Administrator

10. Heather McDaniel, President, Tompkins County Area Development
    (primary economic development agency for city and county)

11. Katherine Borgella, Commissioner, Planning & Sustainability, Tompkins County
July 10, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: City of Ithaca, New York BUILD Planning Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of the City of Ithaca to submit a BUILD Planning grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In recent years, Ithaca has been focusing its development on its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront neighborhood — a federally-designated Opportunity Zone. Strong progress is underway but hindered by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

Our BUILD Planning application seeks funding assistance to implement a primary recommendation in the City’s recently adopted comprehensive plan:

"Transform the Route 13 limited-access corridor into a complete street urban boulevard to reconnect the city with its Cayuga Lake waterfront and stimulate economic development."

The BUILD grant will enable the City to coordinate with stakeholders and develop construction plans to redesign an 0.85-mile segment of Rt. 13 to revitalize the waterfront, vastly improve the transportation network, and spur new investment critical to the community’s economic vitality and regional innovation. By virtue of this letter, Ithaca pledges 50% match funding of $1,372,533 for planning and design of this critical highway corridor, accessibility and connectivity enhancements, and improved Route 13 intersections.

The City needs U.S. DOT’s help to capitalize on the economic development potential of the waterfront neighborhood and improve safety, connectivity and accessibility for all types of users along this vital transportation corridor. I ask that you give the highest consideration to Ithaca’s application for BUILD funding. Thank you very much for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

Svante Myrick, Mayor

"An Equal Opportunity Employer with a commitment to workforce diversification."
July 9, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao, Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Ithaca’s BUILD Planning Grant for Cayuga Lake waterfront

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support to City of Ithaca’s BUILD Planning grant application which will leverage over $250 million in regional economic investment.

The BUILD project will enable the community to transform the Route 13 corridor and create 250 new jobs. The project will bring about new access to the Ithaca Farmers Market, attracting visitors, stimulating market growth, and supporting over 1660 farmers within 30 miles of the market. With $90 million invested by Organic Waterfront LLC, and $40 million by the Cayuga Medical Center and Park Gove Realty, safe, modern, and accessible transportation along the Rt. 13 corridor is necessary to support the future traffic to these projects.

This project is vital to meeting the transportation infrastructure needs of a growing region as new investment opportunities arise. With U.S. DOT resources, Ithaca can properly plan the extension of 5th Street to the Cayuga Waterfront and improve accessibility along Route 13.

I urge the Department of Transportation to give full and fair consideration to this grant request as a matter of community improvement and development. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

Tom Reed
Member of Congress

TR: tw
July 8, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590  

Re: Strong Support for Ithaca’s BUILD Application to Revitalize Route 13 Corridor

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of Cayuga Medical Center at Ithaca to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Ithaca is focused on developing its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally designated Opportunity Zone. This revitalization effort is hindered, though, by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

Route 13 is a four-lane highway that splits neighborhoods to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. The City has a bold plan to transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections, clearly-marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, Ithaca seeks to extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront. The project will improve safety by enhancing accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, while using Complete Street and other design best practices to more effectively direct traffic.

Cayuga Medical Center strongly supports Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor waterfront area, because of our significant investment and upcoming development of Carpenter Park, which will provide enhanced health care services, commercial businesses, residential and Affordable Housing to the Ithaca community. We are part of a complete revitalization effort along this section of Route 13 that will have lasting impact for generations.

To revitalize its waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users. The City needs DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development. Please support Ithaca’s application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John W. Turner  
Vice President of Public Relations  
Cayuga Medical Center at Ithaca
Re: Strong Support for Ithaca’s BUILD Application to Revitalize Route 13 Corridor

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of Ithaca Farmers Market to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Ithaca is focused on developing its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally designated Opportunity Zone. This revitalization effort is hindered, though, by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

Route 13 is a four-lane highway that splits neighborhoods to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. The City has a bold plan to transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections, clearly-marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, Ithaca seeks to extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront. The project will improve safety by enhancing accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, while using Complete Street and other design best practices to more effectively direct traffic.

The Ithaca Farmers Market is a local and regional institution, organized as a cooperative of 160 small businesses that produce wares within 30 miles of the Market. Market history dates to 1973, and became established at Steamboat Landing, on the Ithaca Waterfront, in 1988. It’s location makes it one of the earliest modern venues for public waterfront enjoyment in Ithaca today. The Ithaca Farmers Market strongly supports Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor waterfront area. Mixed-use waterfront development will improve the environment for commerce and public interaction, and the welcome addition of enhanced vehicle and pedestrian access to the Market would assist in increasing economic opportunities for our market businesses.

To revitalize its waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users. The City needs DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development. Please support Ithaca’s application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Becca Rimmel
Becca Rimmel
Market Manager
Ithaca Farmers Market
July 8, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Strong Support for Ithaca’s BUILD Application to Revitalize Route 13 Corridor

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of the Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council (ITCTC) to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Ithaca is focused on developing its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally designated Opportunity Zone. This revitalization effort is hindered by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

Route 13 is a four-lane highway that splits neighborhoods to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. The City has a bold plan to transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections, clearly marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, Ithaca seeks to extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront. The project will improve safety by enhancing accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, while using Complete Street and other design best practices to more effectively accommodate traffic.

The ITCTC’s 20-year Long-Range Transportation Plan includes goals and policies addressing the importance and interrelationship of land development patterns, connectivity, transportation efficiency and quality of life - www.tompkinscountyny.gov/itctc/lrtp. The ITCTC is committed to working with local municipalities to implement programs and projects that support common goals. Ithaca’s BUILD proposal meets this criterion by improving multimodal connections between existing neighborhoods and areas with economic development opportunities such as the Cayuga Lake waterfront.

To revitalize its waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users. The City needs DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development. Please support Ithaca’s application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Fernando de Aragón, AICP, Staff Director
Ithaca-Tompkins County Transportation Council
July 9, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Project Growing Hope’s support for Ithaca’s BUILD Planning Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

I’m writing on behalf of Project Growing Hope to convey our support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD Planning grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Our organization manages the Ithaca Community Gardens, which is located along Route 13 in the planned project zone. We offer approximately 150 community garden plots, and about 80% of our gardeners live in nearby neighborhoods on the opposite side of Route 13. The current pedestrian crossing, at the intersection with Third Street, is highly dangerous. I personally was hit by a car the summer before last while crossing Route 13 at that intersection. A large part of the problem is that Route 13 looks like a highway, and drivers do not think to watch for pedestrians and bicyclists, even though there are many of us at that intersection, both for the Community Gardens and for the Ithaca Farmers Market. Proposed new developments in the waterfront area will also dramatically increase the number of pedestrians and bicyclists along that corridor.

The Board of Directors of Project Growing Hope strongly supports the City’s proposal to improve the safety and accessibility of the waterfront area along Route 13, especially for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Our support for the proposed Fifth Street extension is contingent on the city’s ability to obtain neighborhood support for that project. It is also contingent on a design for the new street that does not impinge on the Ithaca Community Gardens site.

The City needs U.S. DOT help to make this project possible. Please support Ithaca’s planning application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration and review.

Sincerely,

Marty Hiller
President, on behalf of the Board
July 8, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Park Grove Realty strongly supports Ithaca’s BUILD Planning Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

Park Grove is the designated developer for Cayuga Medical Center’s (CMC) effort to bring a mixed-use development to Carpenter Business Park, which sits at the entrance of the city. The mixed-use development will include medical services and offices, market rate and affordable housing, commercial and retail uses. Carpenter Park is an approximately 10-acre site of urban blight that has been undeveloped for years. The infrastructure and road network desperately need to be improved to assist with the transformation of this area at the gateway to the City of Ithaca. The mixed-use development would bring the first medical facility to downtown Ithaca. Currently, the only medical facility in the county is outside of the city and not sufficiently accessible because of the traffic congestion and road network in the city. The improvements to Route 13, which is the main traffic corridor in Ithaca, are critical to address the growth and essential services in the community.

This project will be essential to meeting the transportation infrastructure needs of a growing region as new redevelopment and revitalization opportunities arise. This will include new public spaces for waterfront trails and outdoor activities, an expansion of the regionally renowned and vibrant Ithaca Farmers Market, the preservation of community gardens, and an “Innovation District” in Cornell University warehouses for new entrepreneurs, maker spaces, light manufacturing, and mixed-use development.

Yet, to truly revitalize the waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users ranging from delivery trucks and boat trailers to pedestrians and cyclists. The City needs U.S. DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development and regional priorities. Please support Ithaca’s planning application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration and review.

Sincerely,

Andrew V. Bodewes
Partner
July 10, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Strong Support for Ithaca’s BUILD Application to Revitalize Route 13 Corridor

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of Tompkins County, I would like to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Ithaca (our County seat) is focused on developing its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally designated Opportunity Zone. This exciting revitalization effort is hindered, however, by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

Route 13 is a four-lane highway that splits neighborhoods to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. The City’s a bold plan will transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections, clearly-marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, Ithaca seeks to extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront. The project will improve safety by enhancing accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, while using Complete Street and other design best practices to more effectively direct traffic.

Development of our waterfront has long been a goal for Tompkins County, in collaboration with the City and our other lakefront municipalities. We strongly support Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor because this initiative will truly unlock a cascade of projects that are waiting for just such infrastructure improvements. The BUILD proposal is exactly the right next step, at exactly the right time.

To revitalize its waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users. The City needs DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development. Please support Ithaca’s application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Martha Robertson  
Chair, Tompkins County Legislature
July 11, 2019

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Strong Support for Ithaca’s BUILD Application to Revitalize Route 13 Corridor

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of Tompkins County to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Ithaca is focused on developing its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally designated Opportunity Zone. This revitalization effort is hindered, though, by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

Route 13 is a four-lane highway that splits neighborhoods to the east from the growing Cayuga Lake waterfront area to the west. The City has a bold plan to transform a 0.85-mile segment of Route 13 into a Complete Street boulevard with improved crossings at key intersections, clearly-marked pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic calming strategies. In addition, Ithaca seeks to extend 5th Street across Route 13 by 0.2 mile to open a new route to the waterfront. The project will improve safety by enhancing accessibility for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, while using Complete Street and other design best practices to more effectively direct traffic.

Tompkins County strongly supports Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor because it will have a transformational impact on the City’s efforts to redevelop waterfront. In addition, significantly improving the Route 13 corridor will drastically enhance transportation and mobility through this corridor by making it easier and safer for everyone traveling through the City to reach their destination.

To revitalize its waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users. The City needs DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development. Please support Ithaca’s application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Molino
Tompkins County Administrator
The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: TCAD strongly supports Ithaca’s BUILD Application to Revitalize Route 13 Corridor**

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of Tompkins County Area Development to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD Planning grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In recent years, Ithaca has been focusing its development on its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally-designated Opportunity Zone. Progress is underway, but hindered by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

TCAD strongly supports Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor waterfront area and this planning grant because it is critical to the success of the Cayuga Health System’s project at Carpenter Business Park. This project will create much needed housing and community medical services to this part of the City. TCAD is committed to delivering incentives to this project from a variety of local, regional and State sources.

This project will be essential to meeting the transportation infrastructure needs of a growing region as new redevelopment and revitalization opportunities arise. This will include new public spaces for waterfront trails and outdoor activities, an expansion of the regionally renowned and vibrant Ithaca Farmers Market, the preservation of community gardens, and an “Innovation District” in Cornell University warehouses for new entrepreneurs, maker spaces, light manufacturing, and mixed-use development.

To truly revitalize the waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users ranging from delivery trucks and boat trailers to pedestrians and cyclists. The City needs U.S. DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development and regional priorities. Please support Ithaca’s planning application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration and review.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Heather McDaniel, CEcD, AICP, EDFP  
President

_Tompkins County Area Development_  
401 E. State St. / E. MLK Jr. St., Suite 402B  
_Ithaca, New York 14850_  
Re: Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability strongly supports Ithaca’s BUILD Planning Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

I write on behalf of the Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability to convey our strong support for the City of Ithaca’s BUILD Planning grant application to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). In recent years, Ithaca has been focusing its development on its underutilized Cayuga Lake waterfront – a federally designated Opportunity Zone. Progress is underway but hindered by an outdated, unsafe, and poorly connected road network.

The Tompkins County Department of Planning and Sustainability strongly supports Ithaca’s effort to revitalize the Route 13 corridor waterfront area, because it will strengthen the connectivity of the transportation network in and around the waterfront area of the City. This area is ripe for new development and is already a hub for many amenities and features beloved by Ithacans. Improving the transportation network will improve vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian flow, catalyze economic development and improve quality of life – all of which are guiding principles in the County Comprehensive Plan.

This project will be essential to meeting the transportation infrastructure needs of a growing region as new redevelopment and revitalization opportunities arise. This will include new public spaces for waterfront trails and outdoor activities, an expansion of the regionally renowned and vibrant Ithaca Farmers Market, the preservation of community gardens, and an “Innovation District” in Cornell University warehouses for new entrepreneurs, maker spaces, light manufacturing, and mixed-use development.

Yet, to truly revitalize the waterfront and spur new investment, Ithaca needs to vastly improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility for all types of users ranging from delivery trucks and boat trailers to pedestrians and cyclists. The City needs U.S. DOT help to advance new opportunities for economic development and regional priorities. Please support Ithaca’s planning application for BUILD funding.

Thank you for your consideration and review.

Sincerely,

Katherine Borgella, AICP
Commissioner of Planning & Sustainability
Plan Ithaca

A Vision for Our Future

CITY OF ITHACA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

City of Ithaca Planning Division

Adopted September 2, 2015
The Comprehensive Plan Committee and Planning staff would like to thank all of the individuals and organizations who provided their input on Plan Ithaca. We greatly appreciate everyone who participated in the planning process with their comments and ideas for the city’s future. We would also like to thank Professor Jennifer Minner and students in the Spring 2015 Concepts and Methods of Land Use Planning class for their work on the draft plan and their assistance with public outreach.

Acknowledgements

Comprehensive Plan Committee

Kirby Edmonds, Chair
David Kay, Vice-Chair
Jutta Dotterweich*
Gary Ferguson
Chad Hoover
Graham Kerslick
Deb Mohlenhoff
Rob Morache*
Alphonse Pieper
C. J. Randall
Larry Roberts
John Schroeder
Tom Shelley
Stephen Smith
Wendy Wallitt
Hollis Erb, Town of Ithaca Liaison
*Former Committee Member

Planning and Development Board

Garrick Blalock, Chair
Mark Darling, Board of Public Works Liaison
Jack Elliott
McKenzie Jones-Rounds
Robert Aaron Lewis
C. J. Randall
John Schroeder

Prepared by the City of Ithaca Planning Division

Megan Wilson, Senior Planner, Project Manager
JoAnn Cornish, Director of Planning and Development
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Nels Bohn, Director of Community Development (Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency)
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Charles Pyott, Research & Editorial Assistant
Debbie Grunder, Executive Assistant
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3.2 Future Land Use Map

Legend
Future Land Use
- Educational
- Enterprise
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Waterfront Mixed-Use
- Urban Mixed-Use
- Environmentally-Sensitive
- Parks
- Cemetery

Railroad
NYS Roads
City Streets
Waterway
City Border
Focus Area

Land use boundaries will be further refined in Phase II.
Higher-Density

Higher-density residential uses are accommodated within the Waterfront Mixed-Use, Urban Mixed-Use, and Enterprise areas.

Urban Agriculture

Community gardens and other urban agriculture projects are appropriate in almost all future land use categories, including Residential, Waterfront Mixed-Use, Enterprise, and Environmentally-Sensitive areas.

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood-scale commercial uses, including small pedestrian-oriented retail, restaurants, personal services, and professional offices, are appropriate in many residential areas. While predominately located in the Fall Creek and Northside neighborhoods at present, additional areas will be considered for neighborhood-scale commercial uses as part of Phase II.
3.3 | Future Land Use Categories

WATERFRONT MIXED-USE

An area for a mix of residential, commercial, and water-related uses where maintaining public access to, and views of, the waterfront is encouraged.

LOCATION
Waterfront Mixed-Use is located on non-park land between the Flood Control Channel and Route 13 and includes Inlet Island.

EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS
This area has a broad range of existing uses including the City Wastewater Treatment Plant, a City Department of Public Works facility, Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit (TCAT) offices and bus garage, a petroleum fuel facility, the largest covered marina on Cayuga Lake, the Cornell University and Ithaca College boathouses, a fitness center, and the Farmers’ Market. Parts of this area offer expansive views across the Flood Control Channel to Cass Park and Treman Marina.

OPPORTUNITIES
Several sites are underutilized or vacant. Most existing buildings in the area are well-below current development thresholds.

PLANNED CHARACTERISTICS
The area will consist of mixed-use development including commercial and housing, with an emphasis on uses that create an active waterfront environment. There will be a focus on the preservation and enhancement of water-related uses. New development should protect viewsheds and allow public access to the waterfront. Pedestrian and bicycle connections should be improved, particularly to adjacent mixed-use areas. Developable space in the waterfront area is at a premium, and reducing the impacts of parking in new development should be carefully considered.

PLANNING ISSUES & CHALLENGES
- Flood-prone
- Existing environmental contamination
- Poor soils, resulting in additional construction impacts and costs
- Railroad crossings
- Major transportation corridors and the railroad are barriers between the waterfront and adjacent neighborhoods
- Lack of sufficient pedestrian & bike connections to Inlet Island
- Auto congestion from local and through traffic
- Adjacency of diverse uses
- Need to maintain visual access to the waterfront
- Retention of existing water-based and waterfront uses
3.3 Future Land Use Categories

ENTERPRISE

This district identifies areas that have primarily industrial, office, and research and development uses, and that are targeted for expansion of business and employment opportunities as well as particular residential uses.

Enterprise is assigned to the following locations:

Cherry Street
The City’s industrial park since 1990, this area has a wide variety of businesses. There is opportunity for increased development due to some vacant or underutilized parcels, including a six-acre City-owned property. This area will be connected to the Black Diamond Trail.

Commercial Avenue
Located in close proximity to a major transportation corridor, this area currently houses large industrial and commercial uses, including the Tompkins County Solid Waste Facility. There may be future opportunities for expansion and diversification of uses.

Emerson
Previously a heavy industrial site, Emerson is now under consideration for redevelopment to include housing, commercial and industrial use. Due to the size of the site and the existing infrastructure, there is an opportunity for significant new housing and business development.

Carpenter Business Park
This relatively large undeveloped area is served by existing infrastructure and is located immediately adjacent to a multi-use trail and a major transportation corridor. It has great potential for business development and employment opportunities.
## Economic Development: Recommendations

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<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td>Maintain a strong economic development function within City government and dedicate staff resources to this purpose.</td>
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<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td>Be a partner in regional economic development efforts that leverage our strengths to create sustainable growth.</td>
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<td><strong>C</strong></td>
<td>Become a regional partner in efforts to apply technology resulting from university research to the development of products and services that compete in a global marketplace.</td>
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<td><strong>D</strong></td>
<td>Encourage infill and redevelopment of underutilized properties, in coordination with the goals of the Land Use chapter.</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Work with business owners, developers, and entrepreneurs to support the creation and expansion of business opportunities.</td>
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<td><strong>F</strong></td>
<td>Support the development and redevelopment of properties in the city, in coordination with the goals of the Land Use chapter.</td>
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<td><strong>G</strong></td>
<td>Ensure that land use regulations provide sufficient appropriate areas zoned to meet the demand for business and employment-based activities.</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>Align land use regulations with the project review and permitting process to support the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.</td>
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<td><strong>I</strong></td>
<td>Research policy options to create disincentives for vacant commercial properties.</td>
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<td><strong>J</strong></td>
<td>Work with community partners to promote tourism.</td>
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<td><strong>K</strong></td>
<td>Preserve and enhance the characteristics that attract tourists to Ithaca, including its sense of place and the beauty of its urban, architectural, and natural environments.</td>
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<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td>Identify and pursue strategies to encourage those traveling through the city to stop for dining, lodging, and shopping.</td>
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<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td>Encourage mixed-use development that includes a range of housing types and employment opportunities, in coordination with the goals of the Land Use chapter.</td>
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<td><strong>N</strong></td>
<td>Connect businesses, developers, and entrepreneurs with available resources.</td>
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<td><strong>O</strong></td>
<td>Seek State and Federal funding to support the economic development goals of the community.</td>
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Governor Cuomo Announces $22 Million Project to Transform Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport

DOT Maintenance Facility Relocation Will Free Up 7.6 Acres Of Prime Waterfront Property on Cayuga Lake to Drive Economic Development the City of Ithaca

Investments Complement "Southern Tier Soaring" - the Region's Comprehensive Strategy to Revitalize Communities and Grow the Economy

See Project Renderings Here

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced a $22 million project to transform the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport as part of the Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition. As a separate project, the New York State Department of Transportation will relocate its maintenance facility from its current location on Cayuga Inlet to the Airport, freeing up 7.6 acres of prime waterfront property for development in Ithaca, resulting in new private investment in the city to generate business and tourism opportunities to stimulate economic activity.

"The land relocation will deliver prime, waterfront development opportunities to the Ithaca community to attract innovative projects, revitalize the economy and generate growth for generations to come," Governor Cuomo said. "Airports are gateways to our regions, and this
project will transform Ithaca Tompkins Airport into a modern, state-of-the-art facility to drive tourism and economic development and help keep the Southern Tier Soaring."

The $22 million project to revitalize and expand the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport is being supported with $14.2 million in state funding as part of the Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitalization Competition. The renovation will not only improve long-term economic viability, but it will also improve the passenger experience, increase security and better serve international travelers.

The Airport serves three major airlines with more than 650 global connections. In 2016, enplanements were up 15 percent and are expected to continue growing in the future. To accommodate this growth, this project will expand the terminal, which together with the new customs facility, will expand the airport by nearly 50 percent. The expanded terminal will provide more seating, six new gates, three additional passenger bridges, bringing the total number of passenger bridges at the airport to four, and new retail opportunities. A new customs facility will allow international aircraft to fly directly to the airport, which sees more than 22,000 international travelers annually. Currently, travelers have to stop at other airports before arriving in Ithaca in order to clear U.S. customs, however, once the project is completed, it will help to enhance the region's ability to grow globally by eliminating this additional travel barrier. Overall, the modern technology and energy efficiency enhancements provided through this project will better serve today's travelers.

Facility upgrades will include:

- Major security enhancements, including updating TSA baggage screening to be compliant with post-9/11 security requirements and adding another line for passenger security screening to alleviate wait times.
- Reconfiguration of the security checkpoint and relocation of TSA office space as part of a 7,500-square-foot expansion of the passenger hold room.
- Reconfiguration of airline office space and expansion of baggage screening space as part of a
2,500-square-foot addition on the east side.
- Baggage security and check-in improvements to streamline the process and improve efficiency.
- Three new passenger boarding bridges to accommodate jet aircraft and additional service.
- Addition of 1,700-square-feet of space at the main entrance and an expanded ticket counter to improve passenger circulation and provide more room for ticket lines.
- Construction of a new 5,000-square-foot Federal Customs Facility.
- Technology upgrades to include high-speed WiFi, Bluetooth connectivity and additional charging ports and outlets.
- Food service enhancements, such as expanding a pre-security café and adding 4,000 square feet of space for post-security food concessions.
- Installation of a separate bus lane and a wind-resistant waiting area for buses, taxis and hotel shuttles.
- Installation of new plumbing, HVAC, fire protection, mechanical and electrical systems.
- Installation of a new geothermal water-source heat pump system to reduce natural gas usage for the terminal.

Work is expected to be completed in 2019.

"Airports are gateways to our regions, and this project will transform Ithaca Tompkins Airport into a modern, state-of-the-art facility to drive tourism and economic development and help keep the Southern Tier Soaring."

**Governor Andrew M. Cuomo**

ITH Logistics Park Development & Land Relocation
As part of the redevelopment of the Airport, the County will develop a 53-acre Airport Logistics Park on Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport property which will feature a new State Department of Transportation maintenance facility. Moving the DOT facility from the city of Ithaca to the Airport will enhance DOT operations and open up 7.6 acres of prime waterfront property for development.

Located just south of Cayuga Lake and the popular Ithaca Farmer's Market, the waterfront parcel also borders the Cayuga Waterfront Trail. Ideas for developing the area include multi-use housing, a hotel, expanded public space and hiking trails, restaurant and boat slips, and commercial lofts.

The current transportation facility, built in 1956, is aging and inadequate for current operations. The project involves constructing a new maintenance garage with roof-mounted solar panels that will meet LEED standards. The Airport Logistics Park will also include space for Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit offices and other future tenants.
DOT Acting Commissioner Paul A. Karas said, "Governor Cuomo's investment in the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport will expand the reach of area businesses and universities on a global level, and further spur economic development. The expansion and modernization will also allow for a safer, more efficient passenger experience."

Senator Tom O'Mara said, "The regional aviation industry has an enormously positive economic impact across the local economy. Our regional airports create jobs, make us more competitive, and deliver economic growth and other critical opportunities to communities across the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes regions. These smart investments in aviation infrastructure will
lead to vital short- and long-term benefits, including in Tompkins County where this transformation of the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport and the relocation of the state Department of Transportation will greatly benefit the county and the city in numerous ways."

Senator James L. Seward said, "The Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport is a key component of our local economy. Recent investments have helped boost airport use and continued state support will lead to added growth. When people touch down at ITH we want them to know they have arrived at someplace special. This funding will help convey that impression and send the message that the sky is the limit in Tompkins and Cortland counties and the surrounding region."

Senator Pam Helming said, "This critical investment will drive job creation and economic development in the Finger Lakes region. Our lakes, beautiful environment, wineries, and craft breweries draw visitors from across the United States. This state investment will ensure that tourists will have access to all that our region has to offer. The Ithaca and Tompkins County region is a growing business and economic center of upstate New York, with positive job growth exceeding 8% over the past 5 years. Equally important, our local universities and business rely on the airport. Protecting Cayuga Lake is a top priority and moving the DOT facility to the airport will help achieve this objective. I appreciate the efforts of Governor Cuomo and my legislative colleagues in making this project a priority."

Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation Joseph E. Robach said, "As Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, I believe it is critically important to invest in safety improvements and the modernization of operations for airports across New York State. The funds announced today for the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport coincide with the goal of improving the economic competitiveness of state airports and allowing for New York residents, and visitors to our great state, the ability to utilize airports that are safe and run efficiently. Continuing to improve our state’s airports is a step to ensuring a 21st Century transportation infrastructure for New York."

Co-Chair of the Legislative Aviation Caucus Senator Phil Boyle said, "The economic boon generated from this type of funding access can dramatically change the financial scope of a
community. Assisting regional airports with funding resources to improve safety and modernize is a critical step in job growth, business expansion, and a potential tourism boost to regions across the state. I applaud the Governor and the State's DOT on this important grant program and encourage all airports across the state to apply for these crucial jumpstart funds."

Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton said, "This is great news for our community. There's no question that this vital investment in our airport will broaden economic and tourism opportunities in our region. In addition, the long-awaited relocation of the NYSDOT facility from Cayuga Lake to the airport will have many positive impacts for Ithaca's waterfront. I was proud to support this funding in Albany, and I want to thank everyone in the city and county governments who have worked so hard to make these ground-breaking projects a reality. I also want to thank the Governor for his continued strong focus on the upstate economy, listening to local stakeholders about the most effective avenues for state investment."

Chair of the Assembly Committee on Transportation David F. Gantt said, "As Assembly Transportation Committee Chair I am pleased to see that our state's airports are eligible for funding to help make them safer, more competitive, and more effective in general for travelers, for the communities where they are located and for our State's economy. The revitalization project at the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport is a perfect example of how smart investment can transform our Upstate airports."

Co-Chair of the Legislative Aviation Caucus Assemblymember Donna Lupardo said, "The Upstate Airport Economic Development initiative recognizes that New York's airports are important economic drivers in their communities. In order to stay competitive, they need regular upgrades to improve safety and modernize their operations. This announcement for Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport will see additional benefits for the Ithaca community by freeing up prime waterfront real estate that will attract further development. As Co-Chair of the Legislative Aviation Caucus, I'd like to thank the Governor for his commitment to the state's airports and look forward to building on this commitment."

Ithaca Mayor Svante Myrick said, "This project will create a once in a generation opportunity to
put Ithacans on the waterfront. Alongside the airport upgrade - which will make it easier for Ithacans to connect to the wider world - this announcement will make Ithaca an even better place to live."

Martha Robertson, Chair, Tompkins County Legislature said, "Today we are celebrating what we can accomplish when local and state governments work together, when the public and private sectors work together, and when problem-solvers and visionaries work together. Thanks to the Governor's support, we'll be creating a vibrant, mixed-use waterfront district, creating space for a 21st century DOT facility, and expanding the Ithaca Tompkins Regional Airport to give us the innovative, world-class airport we need."

Accelerating Southern Tier Soaring

Today's announcement complements "Southern Tier Soaring", the region's comprehensive blueprint to generate robust economic growth and community development. The State has already invested more than $4.6 billion in the region since 2012 to lay for groundwork for the plan - attracting a talented workforce, growing business and driving innovation. Today, unemployment is down to the lowest levels since before the Great Recession; personal and corporate income taxes are down; and businesses are choosing places like Binghamton, Johnson City and Corning as a destination in which to grow and invest. Now, the region is accelerating Southern Tier Soaring with a $500 million State investment through the Upstate Revitalization Initiative, announced by Governor Cuomo in December 2015. The State's $500 million investment will incentivize private business to invest well over $2.5 billion - and the region's plan, as submitted, projects up to 10,200 new jobs. More information is available here.

Contact the Governor's Press Office
Contact us by phone:

Albany: (518) 474 - 8418
New York City: (212) 681 - 4640

Contact us by email:

Press.Office@exec.ny.gov
ATTACHMENTS FORM

Instructions: On this form, you will attach the various files that make up your grant application. Please consult with the appropriate Agency Guidelines for more information about each needed file. Please remember that any files you attach must be in the document format and named as specified in the Guidelines.

Important: Please attach your files in the proper sequence. See the appropriate Agency Guidelines for details.

1) Please attach Attachment 1
2) Please attach Attachment 2
3) Please attach Attachment 3
4) Please attach Attachment 4
5) Please attach Attachment 5
6) Please attach Attachment 6
7) Please attach Attachment 7
8) Please attach Attachment 8
9) Please attach Attachment 9
10) Please attach Attachment 10
11) Please attach Attachment 11
12) Please attach Attachment 12
13) Please attach Attachment 13
14) Please attach Attachment 14
15) Please attach Attachment 15
**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

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Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.
**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

### 16. Congressional Districts Of:

- **a. Applicant**: NY-023
- **b. Program/Project**: NY-023

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

### 17. Proposed Project:

- **a. Start Date**: 03/01/2020
- **b. End Date**: 09/30/2022

### 18. Estimated Funding ($):

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### 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?

- □ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on ___________.
- □ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- □ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

### 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If “Yes,” provide explanation in attachment.)

- □ Yes
- □ No

If “Yes”, provide explanation and attach

### 21. By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications** and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)

□ □ ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

### Authorized Representative:

- **Prefix**: *
- **First Name**: Jennifer
- **Middle Name**: *
- **Last Name**: Kusznir
- **Suffix**: *
- **Title**: Senior Planner
- **Telephone Number**: 607-274-6410
- **Fax Number**: *
- **Email**: jkusznir@cityofithaca.org
- **Signature of Authorized Representative**: Jennifer S Kusznir
- **Date Signed**: 07/15/2019
To: Board of Zoning Appeals  
From: Planning & Development Board  
Re: Comments for Zoning Appeal #3164  
Date: September 30, 2020  

Members of the Planning and Development Board discussed the above-listed Zoning Appeals and agreed to forward the following recommendation:

APPEAL # 3164  
215 E State/MLK Street  

Area Variances  

Appeal of property owner Ithaca Properties, LLC for an Area Variance from Section 325-8, Column 8, Number of Stories, Column 9, Height in Feet, and Column 14/15, Rear Yard, requirements of zoning ordinance. The applicant proposes to construct a new mixed-use building at 215 E. State Street. The property is a through-parcel with frontage on both the Commons (E. State Street) and E. Green Street and is currently occupied by a commercial building on the Commons side and the eastern third of the Green Street Parking Garage on the E. Green Street side. The applicant proposes to demolish the eastern third of the Green Street Parking Garage and construct a new building on the portion of the site currently occupied by the garage. The existing commercial building on the Commons will be retained. The new building will provide 200 residential units and three levels of structured parking. The new parking decks will connect to the center section of the Green Street Parking Garage, and the new building will connect to the existing commercial structure to provide an interior pedestrian corridor between E. Green Street and the Commons. The proposed building will be 14 stories and will exceed the 12 stories allowed by the zoning ordinance. The proposed building will also exceed the maximum height of 140’, with a height of 156’ 10’ at the top of the elevator tower. The applicant seeks the additional building height to accommodate the parking decks, connect to the existing commercial building for pedestrian access, and provide a rooftop terrace for residential tenants.

In addition, the applicant proposes to construct the building at the rear property line on E. Green Street, providing 0’ of the required 10’ rear yard. The elimination of the rear yard on this site is intended to create a consistent street line among existing and other proposed buildings on E. Green Street and to activate the streetscape.

The property is located in the CBD-60 and CBD-140 use district in which the proposed use is permitted. However, Section 325-38 requires that an area variance be granted before a building permit is issued.

The Board has revised their previous recommendation as follows:

The Planning Board does not identify any negative long term planning impacts and supports this appeal. The applicant seeks the additional building height to accommodate the parking decks, connect to the existing commercial building for pedestrian access, and provide a rooftop terrace for residential tenants.

The additional stories are to accommodate a rooftop terrace (considered a story under the City's zoning code) and add an additional floor of housing. The Board feels that, in this particular case, the additional story benefits not only the applicant, but the City and its residents and visitors as well. The Board reasoning is as follows:

- The applicant is rebuilding two decks of public parking at the east end of the City-owned Green Street Garage that is incorporated into the building on the lower levels. This section of the garage is in urgent need of...
replacement. By incorporating this urgent need into a larger development project, the supply of public parking is maintained without capital cost to the City and its taxpayers, as the City will lease-back the parking at project completion.

- Additional housing in an appropriate location in the downtown core is of great value to the City and its residents.
- The Board has looked extensively at the massing and design of the building. They have found it to be well designed, consistent with the Downtown Design Guidelines and a significant enhancement to Green Street.
- Due to the building’s location, tucked between the Marriott hotel to the east and the future parking decks to the west and pushed far back form the Commons, the additional height does not render any negative impacts to surrounding neighbors.
- The height of the building does not appear to be 14 stories as only 13 are visible, and the tallest portion of the building (the elevator tower) is in the center of the building and not highly visible.

In addition, the applicant proposes to construct the building at the rear property line on E. Green Street, providing 0' of the required 10' rear yard. Rear yard setbacks are established to preserve space, light and air between properties. A rear yard setback is not needed in this case because the 1) the building extends through the block therefore there is no need to provide space light and air between two buildings and 2) because the residential entrance is on Green St, it is more desirable to bring the building closer to the sidewalk to create a consistent street edge than to push it back ten feet to provide the required setback.

**APPEAL # 3162**

120 E. GREEN STREET

Appeal of the Vecino Group, in partnership with property owner the Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency, for area variances from Section 325-8, Column 9, Height in Feet, and Column 14/15, Rear Yard, requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant proposes to demolish the eastern third of the Green Street Parking Garage and construct a new mixed-use building on the same site at 120 E. Green Street. The first three floors of the building will house a 49,000 SF conference center while floors 4-12 will provide 218 affordable housing units. The project will build upon the existing center section of the Green Street Parking Garage to provide a total of 350 spaces of structured parking. The existing parcel will be subdivided, and the Vecino Group will take ownership of an approximately 55,000 SF parcel that includes the existing eastern and center sections of the parking garage; the proposed building will be constructed on this site. The City of Ithaca will retain ownership of the remainder of the site, including most of the land used for the City Hall Parking Lot and the alleyway between the existing parking garage and adjacent buildings on the Commons.

The first three floors and a portion of the fourth floor will be constructed on the rear property line of the subdivided parcel, providing 0' of the required 10' rear yard. The applicant is requesting a variance from the rear yard requirement in order to accommodate the rooms sizes needed to support the conference center and to allow for the provision of a community room on the fourth floor. The remainder of the fourth floor and floors 5-12 will be set back 10' from the rear property line and will meet the requirement of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant also proposes to exceed the maximum 140' building height allowed by the Zoning Ordinance. The southwest corner of the building will be 150' in height to allow for taller floor to ceiling heights in the proposed Sky Terrace on the 12th floor.

The property is located in a CBD-140 use district in which the proposed uses are permitted. However, Section 325-32 requires that an area variance be granted before a building permit is issued.

The Planning Board does not identify any negative long term planning impacts and supports this appeal. The following information is in the FEAAL Part 3 and explains the Board’s reasoning and process for supporting the massing and design of the building, including the required variances:

The design of the Asteri Project was recently changed to address Lead Agency feedback regarding the limited space between the Asteri Project and a recently constructed building located to the north (“Harold’s Square”). Harold’s
Square received a rear yard variance and was built close to its southern property line. Likewise, the Asteri Project requested relief from the 10' rear yard setback in order to accommodate the space requirements for the community conference center and maximize the number of affordable housing units. Complete relief from the rear yard setback would allow the Asteri Project to be built 12’ from Harold’s Square for the full height. However, although the first 3 floors (containing the community conference center) were designed to be approximately 14’ from Harold’s Square, the residential tower is U-shaped, providing light and air between the buildings. The original design had a slight step back such that there was 19’ between Harold’s Square and the closest walls of the New Building. Nevertheless, the Lead Agency asked the Applicant to explore a design that would provide more space between the two buildings.

Based on input during the public hearing and Lead Agency discussion, the Applicant presented a revised design at a July 16, 2020 Special Meeting. The new design retains the encroachment in the rear yard for floors 1-4 but steps back floors 5-12 an additional 10 feet to be well within compliance with the rear yard setback. The Applicant stated that the step back was implemented on the fifth floor, rather the fourth floor (the first floor of the residential tower) due to structural requirements pertaining to the size of the conference center ballroom.

The revised design is shown in drawings and visualizations contained in the presentation that was shown at a 7-16-20 special meeting of the Planning Board and in application materials dated 7-23-20. The Lead Agency has reviewed these section and plan view drawings that demonstrate the approximate 14’ gap between floors 1-4 and the approximate 24’ gap between levels 5-12 of the New Building and Harold’s Square. The Lead Agency also reviewed drawings and visualization showing how the Applicant proposes to create more interest on the north façade of levels 2-3 (facing Harold’s Square) and a more welcoming and dynamic pedestrian zone between the two buildings. The pedestrian zone improvements include inset niches between building columns, installation/relocation of public art, lighting and varied building materials. These design changes allow for increased light and air between the buildings and enhance the pedestrian experience between these two buildings.

At the July 16 special meeting, the Lead Agency also considered a presentation by representatives of the community conference center working group as well as the Ithaca Conference Center Market and Feasibility Study prepared by Hunden Associates and dated April 2017, updated in 2019 (“Feasibility Study”) to estimate the number, type and attendance of events. This information allowed the Lead Agency to understand the relationship between the size of the ballroom required for a feasible facility and the size and footprint of the New Building.

The Lead Agency has considered all the information and acknowledged the following priorities:

- A community conference center of a particular size to be located in the downtown core.
- The need for housing, particularly affordable housing.
- The need for adequate space, light and air between buildings for the comfort of building residents, as well as downtown workers and visitors.
- The need for a vibrant, safe and interesting pedestrian zone.

The Lead Agency has determined that the Asteri Project as a whole has many positive aesthetic benefits. Both the Asteri Project and Adjacent Project will transform the north side of Green Street from primarily a service area (parking garage) behind the Commons to an active and vibrant area that will complement development on the south side of Green Street. While there are scenic resources noted in the EAF approximately 2 miles from the Site, the New Building is not expected to be out of scale or character with surrounding structures in the City. The New Building will include the Asteri logo, which has been designed to fit in with the overall aesthetic of the New Building. The Lead Agency has determined that the above listed priorities have been balanced and any potentially minor negative impacts to aesthetic resources have been mitigated to the maximum extent practicable by redesigning the New Building and activating the pedestrian zone. Accordingly, no significant adverse impact to aesthetic resources is anticipated.
APPEAL #3165
419 N. CAYUGA STREET

Appeal of property owner Barken Family Realty for an Area Variance from Section 325-8, Column 7, Lot Width, Column 11, Front Yard, and Column 13, Other Side Yard, requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant recently renovated a vacant 4-unit residential building located at 419 N. Cayuga Street. The building currently contains 1 one-bedroom unit, 1 two-bedroom unit, and 2 one bedroom units with studies. The applicant would like to use the study rooms in each of the two ground floor units as bedrooms. This change would convert the 2 one-bedroom units with studies to 2 two bedroom units and would increase the overall building occupancy. The proposed change meets NYS Residential Code, and the property has sufficient off-street parking for the proposed occupancy. No further exterior or interior alterations are proposed. However, the proposed increase in occupancy is considered an enlargement of a nonconforming structure. The property is 49’ wide at the street and a minimum lot width of 50’ is required in the R-3aa zone. Section 325-32 of the Zoning Ordinance states that an area variance must be granted before increasing the unrelated occupancy of a property that does not meet the minimum lot size requirements. The property also has existing front yard and other side yard deficiencies that will not be exacerbated by the proposal.

The property is located in the R-3aa use district in which the proposed use is permitted. However, Section 325-32 requires that an area variance be granted before a building permit is issued.

The Planning Board does not identify any negative long term planning impacts and supports this appeal. The Board supports increased housing options, which, in this case, can be accomplished with no exterior change to the building.

APPEAL #3168
230 BRYANT AVENUE

Appeal of Michael Barnoski of Trade Design Build Architecture for an Area Variance from Section 325-8, Column 4, Off-Street Parking, Column 11, Front Yard, and Column 12, Other Front Yard, requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The applicant proposes to construct a third story dormer to provide additional space within an existing apartment as part of a larger renovation and reconfigurations of the building. There are four apartments in the building (2 one-bedroom units, 1 two-bedroom unit, and one four-bedroom unit), and the Zoning Ordinance requires five parking spaces for the dwelling. The property has established parking rights and provides 4 off-street parking spaces. The proposed alteration will not allow additional occupancy or require additional off-street parking; however, Section 325-32 of the Zoning Ordinances states that an area variance must be granted to enlarge a nonconforming structure if it does not comply with the parking requirements. The dwelling also has existing front yard and other front yard deficiencies that will not be exacerbated by the proposal.

The property is located in a R-1b residential use district in which the proposed use is permitted pursuant to a use variance granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals in 1948. However, Section 325-32 requires that an area variance be granted before a building permit is issued.

The Planning Board does not identify any negative long term planning impacts and supports this appeal. The proposal improves the property and makes it more contextual with the neighborhood.
Planning Board Retreat Notes from June 30, 2020

Diversity of PB Members/Diversity of Voices
- How to better engage communities of color
- How to bring more People of Color into the conversation
- Build a pool of diverse PB candidates for when there is a vacancy
- Have diverse Board advisors (in addition to members)

Diversity of Development Community
- Outreach- what industries are related to planning and who is involved
- Staff can talk to developers early on about the importance of diverse teams
- Lending should be more equitable
- WMBE- Can PB influence or provide incentives?

Housing Affordability
- Process of affordability
- What influence can PB have regarding affordability?
- Can PB have a vote on PUDs?
- Data project to demonstrate/investigate displacement due to housing (in)affordability
  - Work with CU grad students
  - Collaborate with INHS
- Investigate asking CC for more power through the SPR ordinance
- Inclusionary zoning – pick this up again
- How to influence the types of housing being built

Tools/Strategies/Resources/Framework
- Advocate and/or lobby to change laws
- Exercise PB powers and duties outside of SPR
- Data & Statistics – studies to support change
- Prioritize means of access
- Obligation to look out for city residents and those who use/need the city
- Equity and transportation
- Use Equity goals of Comp Plan Plan Ithaca 2015
- Need clear statement with intention and goals