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TWO PAGES

Inclusion Through Diversity

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Council of Governments, County File Federal Stimulus Proposal**

Tompkins County municipalities are advancing more than \$300 million dollars in local projects which they maintain will play a key role in revitalizing the state and national economy as part of the nation's American Recovery and Reinvestment plan.

The package, prepared by Tompkins County administration on behalf of the Tompkins County Council of Governments (TCCOG), has been submitted to the New York State Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Cabinet, with a copy to Governor David Paterson.

Speaking at a news conference this morning, Caroline Town Supervisor Don Barber, who chairs the Council of Governments, stated, "Congress and the new administration are creating a federal stimulus package that will put into place a national economic recovery and reinvestment program with the goals to reinvigorate the nation's economy, promote long-term economic growth, and bring needed relief to the nation's working families. Word of the pending federal stimulus package provided TCCOG another occasion to cooperate and provide a greater opportunity together than we could have individually. We are announcing today that Tompkins County and its 16 municipalities have prepared a summary of nearly 180 strategic reinvestment projects presented to the Governor, our State Legislature delegation and our U.S. Senators and Congresspersons."

The nearly \$300 million in proposed stimulus investments include:

- More than \$100 million for transportation infrastructure
- Nearly \$90 million for public water and sewer infrastructure
- More than \$50 million for low-to-moderate income housing construction and rehabilitation
- Nearly \$10 million for energy efficiency improvements for public buildings
- More than \$9.5 million for public transportation
- \$6.4 million for renewable energy related to public buildings
- \$6 million for flood control and mitigation
- \$5.8 million for information technology
- \$4.2 million to protect vulnerable populations and vital services
- \$3.7 million for higher education
- \$3.2 million for public safety and emergency response facilities
- \$2.5 million for solid waste and recycling programs
- Nearly \$2.5 million for airport infrastructure
- Nearly \$1.7 million for "green" jobs
- \$1.3 million for residential energy efficiency.

More than 40 of the projects would be ready to go in 90 days; more than 50 in 180 days; and 85 within two years, under the readiness categories specified in the federal legislation.

“We’re not unique in submitting a list of worthy projects that will put people to work and energize the economy,” noted Tompkins County Legislature Chair Michael Koplinka-Loehr. “However, we may be unique in coming together as a community, under the auspices of the Council of Governments, to assemble a comprehensive list of projects from all of our local governments. In doing so, we hope to elevate the requests of even the smallest local government, making sure a worthy, high-impact project in a small town doesn’t get lost in the shuffle. We also hope to show decision-makers that we are a community that has its act together, and will work together as a community to fulfill the purposes of the stimulus plan.”

Mr. Koplinka-Loehr thanked TCCOG Chair Barber for spearheading the collaborative effort, Ithaca Mayor Carolyn Peterson for her role in preparing a comprehensive list of City projects to incorporate, County legislators for their involvement and County staff for remarkable efforts in putting the package together.

Local Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, Dan Lamb of Representative Maurice Hinchey’s office, and Governor Paterson’s Regional Representative, Kevin McCabe were all on hand for today’s event. Earlier this month, the Council of Governments sought the advice of Representative Hinchey before it began preparation of the comprehensive package that has now been submitted.

“To turn today's economic challenges into opportunities for productive change; communities must be prepared to respond surely and knowledgeably, taking action now with a plan for the future,” TCCOG Chair Barber remarked. “We are confident that we are ideally positioned to forge ahead with valuable initiatives that will meet community needs, create jobs, and strengthen the State's economy.”

*Contact: Caroline Town Supervisor Don Barber, Chair-Tompkins County Council of Governments, 539-3395; Michael Koplinka-Loehr, Chair of the Legislature 274-5434 or 257-2329.*

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