



**Tompkins County**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

121 East Court Street  
Ithaca, New York 14850

Edward C. Marx, AICP  
Commissioner of Planning

Telephone (607) 274-5560  
[www.tompkinscountyny.gov/planning](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/planning)

## Memorandum

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To: Members of the Planning, Development, and Environmental Quality Committee  
From: Katie Borgella, AICP, Deputy Commissioner of Planning  
Re: Creation of the Tompkins County Energy Advisory Board  
Date: December 14, 2016

### **Requested Action**

Authorize by resolution the creation of the Tompkins County Energy Advisory Board

### **Background**

In the past year, two significant energy planning documents were prepared and presented to the community and the Legislature: the Tompkins County Energy Roadmap and the Energy and Economic Development Task Force Report. Both documents included specific recommendations and called for implementing strategies and evaluating progress regularly. There are also many energy and climate-related initiatives that may benefit from increased coordination and the input and guidance of members of the community who are educated on energy issues and bring community perspective to the initiatives.

Board Function: The Board would serve as an advisory board to the Tompkins County Planning Department, the Tompkins County Legislature and interested community groups on energy, climate change and energy-related economic development issues. The Board would advise on the development and implementation of policy and programs needed to ensure the successful transition of the local energy system to support the County Legislature's goals around greenhouse gas emissions reduction and economic development. The Board will consult and advise on plans, strategies and funding proposals to promote the best possible use of all County and community resources, and to formulate policy for confirmation by the Legislature, as appropriate.

Examples of TCPD programs that would request input from the Energy Advisory Board in 2017 include: the 2030 Energy Strategy, the potential Business Energy Navigator program, the Energy Focus Area Strategy, Energize NY Finance, the Electric Vehicle Charging Station Strategy, and Municipal Tools to Promote Deployment of Renewable Energy Systems. In addition to TCPD programs, it is envisioned that the Board would provide advice to other initiatives in the community that seek its input; for example, the Board could potentially serve in an advisory capacity to Avangrid's Energy Smart Community and Community Energy Coordination projects in the future.

Board Structure: The Board would be established for a three year term of operation running from January 1, 2017-December 31, 2019, with possible extension after 2019 if needed. The Board would consist of 15-20 members. People interested in serving would be asked to complete the County's Advisory Board Application to be considered for the Board and a small group, consisting of

representatives from the County Legislature, County Planning, Tompkins County Area Development, Tompkins County Council of Governments and potentially others, would review the applications and make recommendations to the Legislature on appointments. The Legislature would appoint all members of the Board. The Board would be supported by Tompkins County Planning Department staff.

**Budget Implications**

None. TCPD staff will take on this work as part of developing its overall work program and planning for resource allocation. Also, it is envisioned as a 3-year term so the resource commitment is limited.

**Contact Information**

Katie Borgella, AICP / 274-5560 / [kborgella@tompkins-co.org](mailto:kborgella@tompkins-co.org)