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**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**  
Jason Molino

**DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATORS**  
Lisa Holmes and Amie Hendrix

*Inclusion Through  
Diversity*

*"Promoting excellence in County operations while respecting the needs of the people we serve."*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Highlights of the September 21st, 2020 meeting of the Tompkins County Legislature Expanded Budget Committee**

The expanded Budget, Capital, and Personnel Committee of the Tompkins County Legislature met to review the proposed 2021 departmental budgets from Assessment, the County Clerk's Office and Department of Motor Vehicles, Information and Technology Services, County Attorney's Office, Board of Elections, the Clerk of the Legislature, and the County's recommended capital plan. The Tompkins County Public Library and rural library services also presented proposed supporting agency budgets. Due to financial impacts from COVID-19, County departments were required to submit budgets that reflect a 12% reduction.

#### **2021 Recommended Capital Plan**

County Administrator Jason Molino presented the 2021 recommended capital plan. The proposed capital projects include green facilities and vehicle fleet investments, a downtown government campus, public safety building improvements, an emergency response backup dispatch center, ITS infrastructure, facility restoration, and an airport terminal expansion. The capital plan is an ongoing program to sustain and improve county facilities and infrastructure. The recommended plan reflects a \$20 million decrease in the total capital reinvestment, and an ongoing financial strategy to achieve net-zero emissions by 2040.

#### **Department of Assessment and Information Technology Services Recommend GIS Consolidation**

The proposed Assessment and Information Technology Services (ITS) departmental budgets both addressed a recommended geographic information system (GIS) consolidation that would bring GIS professionals from various County departments under the purview of ITS. The GIS consolidation is recommended to increase efficiencies in operations and collaborations between County departments.

Officials from the Department of Assessment reported on the strong residential real estate market in Tompkins County, with many recent sales exceeding list prices.

#### **Department of Motor Vehicles Adapts to COVID-19 Impacts**

Tompkins County Clerk Maureen Reynolds reported that during the pandemic the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) went 120 days without the ability to welcome customers in person due to state restrictions. Reynolds reported that DMV and Clerk's Office staff found innovative ways to complete transactions and meet customer needs, including online forms, social media engagement, and the use of drop boxes for quick document turnaround.

#### **Libraries Detail Financial and Operational Challenges**

The Tompkins County Public Library and rural libraries from across the County reported on operational changes due to the pandemic and the ensuing reduction of in-person services. The libraries detailed the financial challenges that they face, including a 22.6% reduction in New York State funding to the Finger Lakes Library System. Legislators remarked on the resiliency and creativity that libraries have shown throughout the pandemic. There was a discussion on how libraries have adapted to sustain, or in some cases increase the impact they have on their communities. County Administrator Jason Molino recommended a \$50,000 over-target-request for the Tompkins County Public Library in lieu of reduced fundraising opportunities due to the pandemic; the funding is recommended to support collections.

Past 2021 budget presentations and discussion can be viewed on the County's [YouTube page](#).  
The County's budget process and documents can be found on the County Administration [Website](#).

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