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Tompkins Chamber & CVB to List Iconic Property at East Shore Drive

Ithaca, N.Y. – The Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and President Jennifer Tavares have announced that the Chamber and Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) will be listing its property at 904 East Shore Drive in Ithaca for sale.

After nearly three decades of being headquartered at the iconic facility, the Chamber & CVB have determined that the organization and its stakeholders will be better served from its other current locations, and with a different permanent office location in the future. The Chamber & CVB will be evaluating their office and meeting space needs in the coming months and exploring options for leasing a new space in Ithaca once their property sells.

The Chamber's leadership indicates that the potential sale of the property at East Shore Drive was discussed in several settings since 2017, prior to the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic impacts. These recent developments, including an interim remote work environment over the last several months, have prepared the organization for this transition.

Chamber President Jennifer Tavares said: "The majority of our team's incredible work as conveners and service providers is done out in the community, and hosted by our members, tourism partners, and stakeholders. While we have been evaluating our space and associated costs for some time, the last several months have shown that our team can be responsive, creative, and effective from any location. This strategic decision will allow the Chamber & CVB to be more agile, financially resilient, and to make appropriate investments in the future to better serve our mission, our members, and our partners."

VP Tourism & CVB Director Peggy Coleman said: "The Convention & Visitors Bureau engages with visitors in myriad ways throughout our community once they arrive. Our sales team is more effective out of our office, engaging with potential tour companies and conference planners. Our ability to continue operations of two visitor centers, to enhance our mobile and off-site visitor touch points, and to invest more resources in promoting our destination will only strengthen the efficacy of the CVB, and increase our economic impact on the community."

Board Chairperson Rachel Hogancamp said: "Our Board and committees have engaged in evaluating the Chamber and CVB's need for space now and in the future. We explored several options with the goal of ensuring that we're investing our time and resources in serving our members and our mission. I'm proud that this decision has full support of our Board of Directors

and the Chamber & CVB team – it seems the time is right to make a strategic shift that will benefit the organization and help ensure its sustainability in the long term.”

The Chamber and CVB have other physical locations in Tompkins County, including at the Tompkins Center for History & Culture in downtown Ithaca and the Taughannock Overlook Visitor Center in Ulysses. The CVB will continue to operate the Taughannock Visitor Center for the remainder of the fall season and will resume operations at the Downtown Visitor Center soon. The Tompkins Chamber offices at East Shore Drive will be occupied and open by appointment over the next several months, and its downtown office will be used more in the near future.

The property will be listed with Jill Burlington of Warren Real Estate and will be available to public the for showings beginning Tuesday, September 22nd. Serious inquiries are welcome and may be directed to Ms. Burlington at jill@warrenhomes.com.

The Chamber & CVB have communicated this decision directly with their stakeholders by email in advance, but information about this decision and related FAQs are also available on the Chamber’s website at tompkinschamber.org.

“I’m very excited about what this strategic opportunity means for the future of the Chamber and CVB. Even through very difficult times, this will provide us the flexibility we need to continue supporting our members and partners for years to come,” said Tavares.

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About the Tompkins Chamber

With over 700 active members, the Tompkins Chamber is dedicated to making our county a great place to live and work. We are a progressive, forward-thinking organization dedicated to promoting business in our region by being the community's nexus. The Tompkins Chamber works to forge links between and among business and government, community organizations, residents, and institutions.

The mission of the Tompkins Chamber & CVB is to foster sustainable economic growth through service to our members, strategic advocacy, workforce development, destination marketing, and quality-of-life investments.