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**Mission:** Our mission is to assist older adults and persons with long term care needs to live independently in their homes and communities with quality of life and dignity.

The 2021 Proposed Plan Abstract of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging/NY Connects will be presented virtually on October 27, 2020 at 2:30 pm. The plan will also be posted on the Tompkins County Office for the Aging websites Public Hearing page. In addition, a survey link will be provided for people to access to respond to the plan and provide feedback. If you are unable to access the internet you can provide your feedback and questions by calling our office at 607-274-5482. Questions and feedback regarding the plan will be received throughout the month of October. The final Plan will reflect comments and suggestions made by the public.

The Proposed Plan Abstract includes findings from the following sources: the 2012 and 2019 Needs Assessment of Tompkins County Individuals Age 60+, the 2016 Age Friendly Ithaca and Tompkins County Action Plan, direct consumer feedback, programmatic trends, program evaluations, satisfaction surveys, information from state agencies and community partners, literature in the field of aging, observations and gaps identified and highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic and from the sage advice from the Advisory Committee of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging.

**Current Services:** For a complete list, please see our 2019 Annual Report at <http://tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa> or contact our office directly to request a copy.

### Directly Provided Services

- ❖ NY Connects Information, Referral and Options Counseling
- ❖ Health Insurance Counseling
- ❖ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)
- ❖ Falls Prevention Home Safety Assessments
- ❖ Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)
- ❖ Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
- ❖ Public Information and Outreach
- ❖ Caregivers Resource Center and Alzheimer's Support Unit
- ❖ Project CARE
- ❖ Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program serving Tompkins, Chemung, and Schuyler Counties

### Subcontracted Services

- ❖ *Better Housing for Tompkins County/Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services:*  
Small Home and Safety Repair Program
- ❖ *Foodnet Meals on Wheels:*  
Senior Nutrition Program
- ❖ *Lifelong:*  
Senior Circle Newsletter  
Multicultural Diversity & Inclusion Program  
Health Insurance Counseling  
Aging Mastery Program  
Senior Planet & Tech Hotline
- ❖ *Finger Lakes Independence Center:*  
Home Care Registry and Consumer Directed Personal Care Services
- ❖ *Staffings, Caregivers, Home Instead Senior Care, Comfort Keepers.*  
Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) Non-Medical Home Care Services
- ❖ *DSS Long Term Care Services:*  
Long Term Care Information & Assistance, EISEP Assessment and Case Management
- ❖ *LAW NY Legal Services:*  
Legal Assistance
- ❖ *Gadabout:*  
Transportation Services

## Tompkins County Office for the Aging Plan for 2021

**Contracts**—The Office for the Aging intends to maintain all its current contracts assuming continuing availability of funds.

**NY Connects**—The Office for the Aging will continue to administer the NY Connects Program. This program provides residents of all ages with objective and comprehensive information about long term care services and supports available in Tompkins County. The Office for the Aging will adhere to the NY Connects Program Standards.

**Age Friendly Ithaca and Tompkins County**— In 2015, Tompkins County and the City of Ithaca were welcomed into the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities, an initiative of the World Health Organization intended to help municipalities prepare for rapid population aging. The initiative is designed to help communities and local governments incorporate healthy, age-friendly principles into relevant policies and programs. The Office for the Aging is collaborating with several community organizations to continue implementing age friendly initiatives. These organizations include the Finger Lakes Independence Center, Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County, Ithaca College Gerontology Institute, Ithaca College, Cornell University, Wonderful Wheelchairs, and Esther Greenhouse, an expert in universal design and aging in place.

**Tompkins County Age Friendly Center for Excellence**- In November 2019, Tompkins County was one of 3 counties in the State awarded a grant from the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York to support the development of an Age Friendly Center for Excellence. The Tompkins County Age-Friendly Center for Excellence (TCAFCFE) is one of five regional Centers in New York State funded to support the NYS Health Across All Policies Initiative by promoting Age Friendly, the NYS Prevention Agenda and Smart Growth Planning principles. The primary goal of the TCAFCFE is healthy aging, which means transforming the social and physical environment to support health and well-being for community members across the lifespan. This goal is achieved through cross-disciplinary organizational partnerships and stakeholder input. The TCAFCFE works directly with County agencies, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, and private partners to advance systems change and solutions at the county level, and to share best practices state-wide. During the next 5 months of the grant our partners and champions will continue to push this important work forward and make Tompkins County a livable community for all ages as well as provide mentorship to other communities who are interested in becoming Age Friendly.

**Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) Program**— In 2015, the Office for the Aging contracted with Doyle Medical Monitoring to offer Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) to Tompkins County residents. The contract improved the technology used in people's homes, assuring compatibility with digital phones and cell phones. The Office for the Aging continues to maintain its involvement in the customer service aspect of the program, with staff continuing to install PERS units in clients' homes. In 2021, the Office for the Aging is hoping to implement new and improved GPS device technology and work to increase the number of clients served through the PERS Program by 10%.

**Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program-** The Office for the Aging will continue to cultivate relationships and partnerships in Tompkins, Schuyler, and Chemung Counties. Currently, we have 2 full time staff who are certified Ombudsmen; a Program Coordinator and an Outreach and Ombudsman Program Specialist. In 2021, their efforts will be targeted toward recruiting and training volunteers, advocating for in-person visitation and re-establishing relationships with facility staff and residents. It is with great anticipation that in-person visits resume in order for our staff to more effectively fill their advocacy role in the lives of the residents we serve.

**Policy Trends--** Through the Long-Term Care Committee and Advisory Committee, the Office for the Aging will continue to monitor the effects of current policy and legislation on the lives of older adults. Examples include the use of hospital observation status under Medicare, home care worker shortage, recognizing and protecting the role the Aging Network plays in addressing the social determinants of health and to improve health outcomes and reduce health care costs, racial disparities and health equity, reviewing the LTSS delivery system and how populations navigate it, and serve as a catalyst to advance changes in the LTSS system to insure the availability of appropriate, quality community services.

**Addressing Social Isolation-** We were already aware of the struggle that many older adults face with loneliness, isolation, and lack of regular companionship. Unfortunately, this has been even further highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. In attempts to mitigate some of the devastating effects of social isolation we began to look for innovative ways to reach people.

**Senior Planet-**Many of our programs had restrictions on in person visits, and we quickly began to switch gears on how we provided programs and services. As the world switched over to virtual, we saw an increasing gap for the clients we serve. Through community partnerships we were introduced to Senior Planet. Beginning in 2020, COFA will be contracting with Senior Planet and Older Adults Technology Service (OATS) to run a tablet project for eligible, case managed clients. These participants will be matched with students from Ithaca College's Aging Studies Program who will become their virtual visitor and support through the process. We will also partner with Lifelong to provide virtual programming for their members as well as a 9 to 5 tech support hotline for members and the pilot project participants.

**Companion Pets-**In 2019, COFA began providing socially isolated clients with robotic companion pets. Going forward, we will continue to match and provide interested clients with a Joy for All Companion Pet. There is compelling evidence that shows these lifelike robotic pets increase meaningful interactions between family and friends, can facilitate intergenerational connection, stimulate conversation and communication, calm anxiety and soothe those who are agitated. These pets can increase quality of life for those with dementia or who are socially isolated.

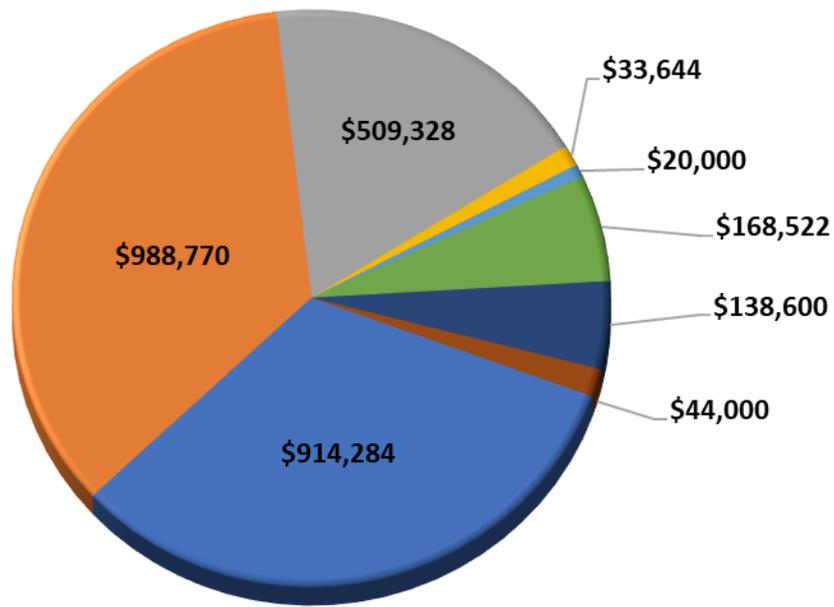
**Client Satisfaction--**In 2020-2021, the Office for the Aging will work with student interns to measure client satisfaction with the following services: : NY Connects, Project Care Friendly Visiting Program, Caregiver Services, Home Safety Assessment Program, Legal Services, the Registry, Senior Center programming and the Home Repair Program.

**Targeting**—The Office for the Aging will continue its efforts to target its services to underserved populations including non-English speakers and racial/ethnic minorities, particularly the Asian community. The Office for the Aging will strive to maintain racial and socio-economic diversity on its Advisory Committee and include seniors from all parts of Tompkins County. Outreach staff members will continue to direct efforts to seniors of lower income, those who are isolated, and those living in rural portions of the County. The Office for the Aging will continue outreach efforts to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender seniors.

**Unmet Needs:** The Office for the Aging maintains a list of “unmet needs.” These are requests for services which are currently in short supply or unavailable in Tompkins County. Efforts are currently underway among service providers, including the Office for the Aging, to address several unmet needs on this list.

- ❖ Home health aides and certified nurse aides
- ❖ Affordable, accessible housing, both subsidized and private sector
- ❖ Transportation services on evenings and weekends as well as out of town medical appointments
- ❖ Transportation escorts (accompanying for appointments or after procedures)
- ❖ Additional funding for home repairs and re-weatherization for low income households
- ❖ Medicaid funded Assisted Living Program (ALP)/Enhanced Assisted Living option, including a dementia unit, for low- and moderate-income individuals
- ❖ Increase in the Medicaid personal needs allowance for residents of skilled nursing facilities
- ❖ Power of Attorney and Health Care Proxy representation for individuals who lack family & friends
- ❖ Assistance for de-cluttering homes for low income individuals
- ❖ Wheelchair ramps for renters/affordable ramps for short term use
- ❖ Geriatricians and geriatric nurse practitioners
- ❖ Legal assistance to assist low income individuals understand and address code violations
- ❖ Behavioral health care for older adults in long term care facilities, including the option of structured group activities, therapy and close medication management which is now only available short term at Charles Cole Hospital (PA) or Rome, NY.
- ❖ Assistance with bill paying/check book balancing services
- ❖ Public benches and resting spots for older adults who walk
- ❖ Portable ramps for individuals who can't afford retrofitting a van

### SOURCES OF FUNDING 2021 COFA BUDGET



- County Funding
- State
- Federal
- Interdepartmental Funding
- Grants
- Matching Funds Contributed by Subcontractors
- Contributions
- Fees and Client Share

<b><u>FUNDING SOURCE</u></b>	<b><u>2021 AMOUNT</u></b>
<b>County Funding</b>	<b>\$914,284</b>
<b>State</b>	<b>\$988,770</b>
<b>Federal</b>	<b>\$509,328</b>
<b>Interdepartmental Funding</b>	<b>\$33,644</b>
<b>Grants</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Matching Funds Contributed by Subcontractors</b>	<b>\$168,522</b>
<b>Contributions</b>	<b>\$138,600</b>
<b>Fees and Client Share</b>	<b>\$44,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,817,148</b>

<b>Comparison of Funding Sources 2020-2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>
Alzheimer's Association of CNY Respite Grant	\$20,000	\$20,000
Care Compass	\$1,000	-----
Federal Balancing Incentives Program: Expanded NY Connects	\$279,522	\$282,243
Federal Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program	\$33,721	\$33,797
Federal Home Energy Assistance Program	\$51,413	\$34,081
Federal Medicare Improvements Patients and Providers Act	\$13,376	\$13,453
Federal Nutrition Services for the Elderly Program	\$110,000	\$110,000
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIB	\$370,954	\$346,254
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIC	\$609,662	\$570,548
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIID	\$5,843	\$5,849
Federal Older Americans Act: Title IIIE	\$58,291	\$52,153
Locally Funded Small Home and Safety Program	\$28,525	\$26,525
Locally Funded Personal Emergency Response Program	\$36,100	\$32,751
NYS Caregiver Resource Center	\$22,239	\$21,788
NYS Community Services for the Elderly Program	\$252,326	\$238,438
NYS Unmet Needs Program	\$85,863	\$85,370
NYS Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program	\$472,389	\$401,629
NYS Ombudsman Program	\$150,465	\$155,057
NYS Wellness in Nutrition	\$385,939	\$387,212
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,987,628</b>	<b>\$2,817,148</b>