

September 11, 2009

Roseanne Viscusi, PON No. 1554
NYS Energy Research and Development Authority
17 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203-6399

To Whom It May Concern:

I offer this letter of support for this proposal to the above-referenced Program Opportunity Notice to develop a community-wide rideshare system to help further minimize vehicle miles travelled on our already congested county roadways and reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Ithaca College, as an early signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, continually looks to integrate new, less energy-intensive ways to meet the diverse mobility needs of our campus community. From the greenhouse gas emissions inventories we have completed, we know that commuting transportation is a significant part of our climate impact. We also understand that the best systems of alternative transportation are multi-modal, providing a variety of means of transportation, so riders can select the one that most appropriately meets their particular purpose at a given time. This is why we have fully supported the development of Ithaca Carshare, the rollout of Tompkins Consolidated Area Transit's new community vanpool program, and why we work diligently to internally market TCAT's existing public transit service to members of our campus community. We have even participated in the NYSERDA-funded feasibility study for a personal rapid transit (*podcar*) system demonstration project here in Ithaca.

However, there is still a key missing element in this *smorgasbord* of local transportation options, and that is a community-wide rideshare system that can easily connect interested passengers with willing drivers across the spectrum of area organizations and businesses. So many of our employees and students reside in the same hometowns as those of other institutions and businesses within the Ithaca area, it seems prudent to offer solutions that meet the needs of multiple individuals and organizations. We have been approached individually by the *Zimride* company, which currently offers some rideshare support for Cornell students through their student government. We fully agree that *Zimride*'s system is intuitive and user-friendly and that it further offers us a suite of really valuable data-collection and reporting tools to support our climate action efforts. However, we also believe that putting the *Zimride* system in place for access by just the members of the Ithaca College campus community would diminish the value and power of an effective rideshare system. We believe it is important to offer our faculty and staff living in far-flung communities – many outside the reach of public transit - the ability to cast a much wider and more productive net out into the region to find shared commuting rides to work. We also see the benefit of extending to the students of multiple regional campuses the opportunity to connect with one another to secure rides home for weekends and vacations.

We support this proposal to develop a three-year pilot of a community-based rideshare program. If funded, we will aggressively market this system to the members of our campus community to engage their support and optimal utilization of the program.

Respectfully,

Carl Sgrecci

Carl Sgrecci
Vice President for Finance and Administration

Note: NYSERDA approved the funding that created *Zimride.Tompkins*, the community-wide rideshare system in Tompkins County, including Ithaca College, Cornell University, and Tompkins-Cortland Community College.