



**SUSAN CHRISTOPHERSON
CENTER FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING**

**Three-Year Strategic Plan
2024-2026**



SUSAN CHRISTOPHERSON
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MISSION

We support New York State communities to plan for a vibrant, climate-resilient future.

VISION

To collaborate with communities in New York State to address unmet needs at the intersection of climate resilience, equity and the built environment through inclusive, participatory, data-driven and results-oriented regional approaches.

HOW WE WORK

DEVELOP policies that support resilient New York State communities

CONNECT municipalities and community-based organizations through workshops, case studies and design charrettes

SERVE as a resource for community-based organizations and public agencies

PARTNER with disenfranchised populations to support their efforts to engage equitably in the planning process

FACILITATE partnerships with higher education to inform and bolster policy initiatives

PROVIDE opportunities for creative, consensus-building community programming

INFORM AND EDUCATE through stakeholder engagement and outreach

WE ARE COMMITTED TO

Inclusion and equity || Meaningful engagement || Regional cooperation and collaboration || Research and data || Economic development || Recognition of complexities and interconnected issues || Enhancing the quality, enjoyment and beauty of the natural and built environment

OUR HISTORY



Dr. Susan Christopherson, an internationally renowned economic geographer and professor in the Department of City and Regional Planning at Cornell University, was a strong advocate for economic development in upstate New York, along with protections for the region's natural resources and communities.

Prior to her passing in 2016, Susan expressed her wish that a center be founded in Ithaca to provide planning resources to underserved communities in the area – as local as the Finger Lakes region and as broad as the rust-belt cities of the Northeast. In 2017, her colleague at Cornell University, Jeffrey Chusid, associate professor of city and regional planning, along with city planner Tom Knipe and former colleague Rod Howe, began to think about how her vision could be implemented. They reached out to others at Cornell and in the area.

Over the next two years, an informal advisory group came together to continue the discussion, as well as to reach out to others who provide planning services – broadly conceived – to different communities throughout the region. Many people contributed time and energy to these efforts, and without the goodwill and generosity of these folks – at Cornell, in other non-profits, and in city and county government – the Christopherson Center would not exist. They confirmed there was both a space and a need for an entity that fulfilled Susan's vision.

By 2019, we were in our new offices at the Tompkins Center for History and Culture and the first iteration of a formal advisory group was in place. Within a year, grant applications were submitted, our first intern was hired and we became a fiscally sponsored project of the nonprofit Center for Transformative Action. In 2021, we welcomed our first full-time employee as Project Director.

PROGRAM GOALS, 2024-2026

Develop programs to achieve three ongoing, scalable programs that are fundable and sustainable and meet our mission of supporting communities.



CROWD (Circularity, Reuse, Zero Waste Development)

Creating a circular construction and building economy in New York State through policy development, education and engagement, workforce development and research and data analysis.

On the Frontline of Change: Positive Acts in Planning

Unique opportunities for planners to engage on the challenges they face in creating a more equitable, climate resilient New York State

Regional Rural Resiliency LAUNCHING IN 2024

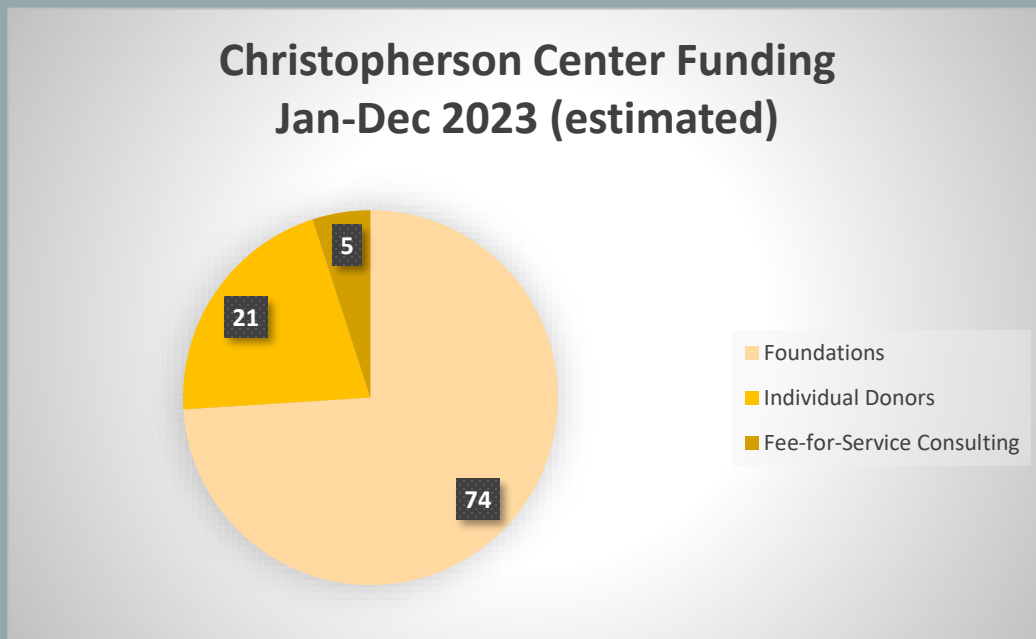
A unique multi-year collaboration to support small communities that lack professional planning capacity to address the challenges of flooding (other topics), with local youth engagement as an important component.

To continuously evaluate the success of our established programs and adequately consider future initiatives, we have established a criteria matrix incorporating our mission, process and other key elements.

FUNDRAISING GOALS

By 2026, we will expand funding and funding capacity in order to better support program expansion to reach more New York State communities.

- Double annual revenue over the next three years.
- Increase amount from existing funding sources and add additional revenue streams to create consistent cash flow.
- Establish 501(c)3 status to allow better access for federal and state grant opportunities.



Additional goals include:

- Strengthen internal capacity of the staff and advisory board, and continue to expand our intern network.
- Boost marketing and communication efforts by expanding our social media presence, developing publicly available content, continuing to participate at conferences and seminars and growing our database.



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*The Christopherson Center is a fiscally sponsored project of
the Center for Transformative Action, a registered 501(c)3.*