

# CHEERS

## Cleveland Harbor Eastern Embayment Resilience Strategy

December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Stakeholder Meeting



# Agenda

- East Side Lakefront Open House Recap
- Partner & Stakeholder Updates
- Workforce Development
- Early Action Plan
- Housekeeping



# East Side Lakefront Open House Recap

# COMMUNITY MEETING THIS WAY!



# THANK YOU to our Partners and Stakeholders!



...Partners and Stakeholder who came and connected with the community members!  
*We had over 80 community members come out on Tuesday 11/18*

...Partners and Stakeholders who tabled!

*UCI*

*City of Cleveland*

*St. Clair Superior*

*Bluestone Heights*

*Kirtland Bird Club*

*NEORS*

*Cuyahoga AOC*

*County Planning and County Public Works*

*USACE*

*MetroParks*

*Port*

...Panelists!

*Brian Zimmerman, Cleveland Metroparks*

*Jillian Svala, Mandel Foundation*

*Terri Hamilton Brown, St. Clair Superior*

*Development Corporation*

*Linda Sternheimer, Port of Cleveland*



# Partner Updates

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*Key supporting stakeholders:*

*Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)*

*Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS)*

*Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)*

# Resilience Hub Update



Presented By:  
Black Environmental  
Leaders Association



“

Two **grants** have **been**  
**awarded,** to support the  
creation of a **Resilience Hub**  
at IYC for community benefit. ”

# CHEERS PROJECT: ACTIVATING OUR STRATEGIC FOCUS



## Our Strategic Focus (AI<sup>2</sup>)



### ADVOCATE

Championing policy & community needs.



### INCUBATE

Nurturing innovative resilience solutions.



### INFORM

Educating and empowering residents.

## CHEERS Project Convergence



### CHEERS Project & Grants

Catalyst for activation & resilience.



**MULTIPLE COMMUNITY BENEFITS**



## INNER CITY YACHT CLUB (IYC): A FUTURE RESILIENCE HUB

A LIFE MEMBER OF BEL, LOCATED ON  
CLEVELAND'S EAST SIDE, ADJACENT TO CHEERS.



- **PROXIMITY IS KEY:** Ideal site to become a community facility.



- **SUPPORT & RESPONSE:** Designed to assist residents during climate-related emergencies.



- **LONG-TERM GOAL:** Promote enduring community resilience.



# ABOUT THE CHEERS PROJECT

CHEERS is a community-led initiative to restore and protect 1.25 miles of Lake Erie shoreline between East 55th Street Marina and the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve. The project responds to climate risks identified in Cleveland's 2015 Climate Resilience Plan, including rising temperatures, stronger storms, and increased flooding.



## CHEERS focuses on:



- Protecting infrastructure like I-90 from storm surges.



- Restoring shoreline habitat and creating  $\pm 100$  acres of greenspace.



- Improving lakefront access for historically underserved neighborhoods.



- Using dredge material to build new parkland and natural buffers.

# CHEERS: EQUITY IN ACTION & MODEL FOR REPLICATION



Reconnecting east side communities, long separated from the lakefront by I-90, with nature and public space. These neighborhoods face high social vulnerability, including poverty and low homeownership rates.



Community input has shaped CHEERS through events, surveys, and partnerships with groups like Black Environmental Leaders and local Community Development Corporations.

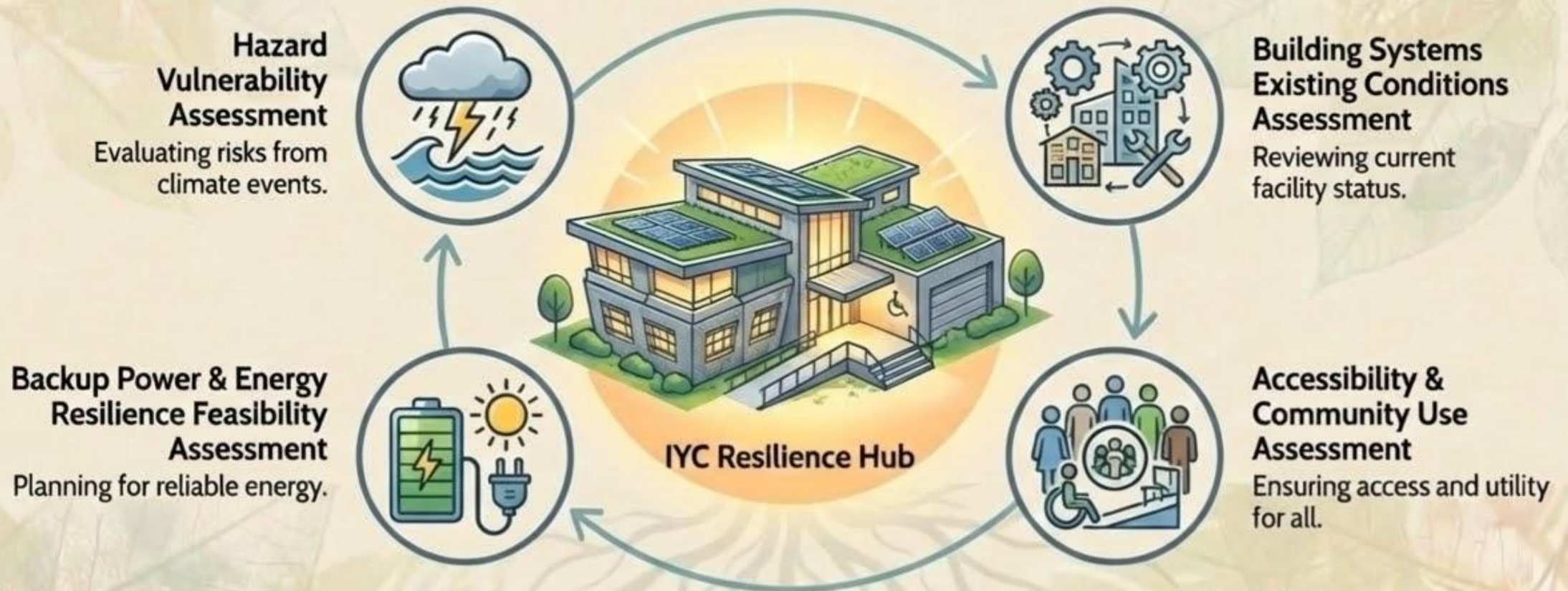


The project is nationally recognized and featured in resilience-focused publications, serving as a model for replication.

# RESILIENCE HUB POTENTIAL AT IYC



Transforming IYC into a resilience hub would complement the CHEERS initiative by offering a trusted, accessible space for community support during climate-related events. The first step in this transformation would be a series of assessments to evaluate existing conditions and align project goals with community needs.



# Resilience Hub Framework & Future Benefits at IYC



## Energy Resilience & Autonomous Service

- Uninterrupted power for critical needs (e.g., medical devices) during outages.
- Emphasizes sustainable energy generation and robust backup power systems.



## IYC Resilience Hub



## Inclusive Community Space & Upgrades

- IYC as a community resource center; upgrades to kitchens and shared spaces.
- Creates inclusive, welcoming, and safe spaces for more people during events.



## Future Grant Benefits (2026)

- FEMA CERT training and distribution of Portable Power Stations.
- **3 Recharge Methods:** 1. Portable Solar Panel (40W), 2. AC Wall Adapter, 3. 12V Car Charging.

# Resilience Hub Update

So in conclusion, the primary outputs and project activities over the next year are as follows:

## Primary Outputs



- Complete Due Diligence Assessment and Hazard Vulnerability Assessments

- Complete a Building Systems Existing Conditions Assessment

- Create a Backup Power & Energy Resilience Feasibility Plan

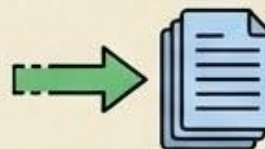


## Project Activities

- Hold 2 co-sponsored community meetings to inform the creation of programmatic outputs

- Complete phase 1 documentation (Outputs 1 – 3) to attract additional funding support for the IYC Resilience Hub

- Facilitate resilience training workshops for community leaders



Feel free to check [www.BlackEnvironmentalLeader.org](http://www.BlackEnvironmentalLeader.org) periodically in 2026 for project updates and more information.



# Thank You

Black Environmental Leaders Association

[www.BlackEnvironmentalLeaders.org](http://www.BlackEnvironmentalLeaders.org)

[admin@BlackEnvironmentalLeaders.org](mailto:admin@BlackEnvironmentalLeaders.org)

440-586-8577

# **Stakeholder Updates**

# **Early Action Project**

# **We've accomplished a lot this year.**

**Taking Steps Toward a Fundable project** – Selected an early action project aligned with grant opportunities and scaled for feasible funding.

**Advanced Workforce Development** – Amplified contributions to the CHEERS vision by initiating a workforce development plan.

**Strengthened Community Engagement** – Connected with East Side community members and key stakeholders through East Side Open House.

**Strengthening Permitting Engagement** - Maintained a strong focus on permitting, actively participating in a USACE alternative milestone meeting and holding bi-weekly coordination meetings with USACE to ensure design alignment.

# 2025 Schedule



NFWF Grant Term Ends

WE ARE HERE

SEP

OCT

NOV

DEC

JAN

FEB

MAR

APR

8: CHEERS Marine Package + Permitting



90% Design  
(Plans, Spec, Cost Estimate)

9 : Evolving Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Graphic Collateral  
(Site Renderings, Flyers, etc)

On-Site Signage Development

10: Project Funding and Grant Support



Workforce Development Plan

3

4

5

6

7

8

11A+B: 90% Phase 1 Marine and Landside Park Design



30% Design  
(Plans, Cost Estimate)

60% Design  
(Plans, Spec TOC, Cost Estimate)

90% Design  
(Plans, Spec, Cost Estimate)

11C: Vision Optimization for CHEERS



Plan Graphics Drafts

Plan Graphics  
(Rendering Update)

## CHEERS Early Action Project:

# Habitat Loop

The critical first step in achieving the larger CHEERS Vision!

### Benefits of the Habitat Loop:



#### Park Space for the Community

- + Provides 6 acres of new park space for public use, featuring walking paths, lawn areas, and expanded subsistence fishing opportunities between E 55th and E 72nd Streets
- + Brings local residents closer to the water
- + Connects users to the Mandel Community Trail



#### Ecological Restoration

- + Creates native shoreline habitat, including 1.7 acres of shallow emergent marsh, 1.85 acres of submergent marsh, and 2.75 acres of upland meadow
- + Supports the recovery of 4 state-listed species: Muskellunge, lake trout, burbot, and lake sturgeon



#### Practical Solutions to Current Challenges

- + Delivers a practical dredge placement solution (with 1-2 years of dredge placement capacity), preserving the region's economic vitality
- + Protects 1/4 mile of I-90 from flooding
- + Demonstrates nature-based solutions along the shoreline



Existing Conditions Aerial Image

# **Work Force Development**

# Workforce Development Plan

## Scope of Work

**Goal:** Ensure that the CHEERS project creates meaningful pathways to employment, particularly in neighboring communities.

This effort seeks to define career pathways for critical roles supporting CHEERS implementation, map the Great Lakes Region's green and blue jobs ecosystem, and initiate partnerships to strengthen regional workforce programming.



# Scope of Work



# Scope of Work



# Workforce Development Ecosystem

Rather than building new programs, **this initiative seeks to leverage the Great Lakes’ established workforce development infrastructure** and position CHEERS as a catalyst for sustained economic growth within that ecosystem.

As of December 11<sup>th</sup>, we have completed a workforce needs assessment identifying 15 priority green- and blue-sector roles, mapped more than 30 regional workforce initiatives, and **conducted interviews with 13 organizations.**

The next phase will convene all engaged partners in a January workshop to align on emerging opportunities and document intent for continued collaboration, even if formal commitments are not yet feasible.

Type of Organization	Name of Organization
Educational Institutions and Training Programs	Case Western Reserve University
	Cleveland Building and Construction Trades Council
	Cleveland State University
	Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative
	Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)
	Holden Forests and Garden
	Kent State University
	Manufacturing Works
	Ohio Laborers' Training Center
	Ohio State University - Climate Ready Workforce
	Ohio Technical College
	Polaris Career Center
	Stark State College (Akron and Canton)
Workforce Development	Apprentice Ohio
	Associated Builders and Contractors
	Built Environment Collaborative
	Cleveland Builds
	Construction Employers Association
	Current Water
	Greater Cleveland Career Consortium
	Greater Cleveland Works
	HHW Ohio
	St. Clair Superior Development Corporation
	TIES
	Towards Employment
	Urban League of Greater Cleveland
	Youth Build
	Youth Opportunities Unlimited (YOU)
Economic Development	Cleveland Neighborhood Progress
	Fund for Our Economic Future
	Greater Cleveland Partnership
	The Cleveland Foundation
	The George Gund Foundation

# Next Steps

Are there entities and programs you'd like us to ensure are involved?

**WFD Ecosystem Workshop**

January 8: 8:30-10:00am

Are there specific use cases for this work we should be considering?

- Inclusion in grant applications
- Community engagement

# Housekeeping

# 2026 Continued Stakeholder Engagement

**Next Stakeholder Meeting will be Spring 2026!** *Look out for an email from Kelly Coffman*

For more information on the CHEERS project, please visit our [website](#). You can also find materials and recordings from previous stakeholder meetings at the bottom of that webpage.

If you would like to add colleagues or other stakeholders to our project listserv, please feel free to reach out to Kelly Coffman (Cleveland Metroparks) or Linda Sternheimer (Port of Cleveland).