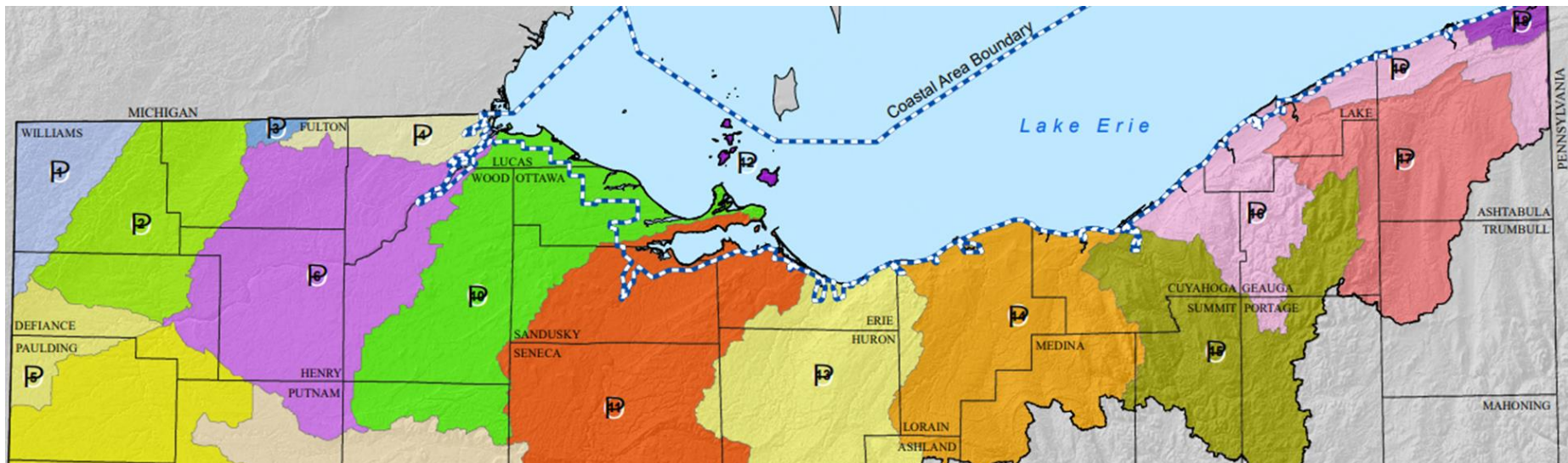# Federal and State Funding for Environmental Justice Projects

Sandra Kosek-Sills PhD

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Lake Erie Communities & Coastal Resiliency Grant

- BIL -> GLRI -> Ohio EPA -> OLEC -> Local Govts

- Eight Lake Erie Coastal Counties

- Focus on addressing Coastal Resilience _with a priority in Underserved Communities_

Lake Erie Commission

Coastal Resiliency

Building the ability of a community to "bounce back" after hazardous events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding – rather than simply reacting to impacts
(NOAA)

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Underserved Communities

Populations, communities or geographic regions that may be limited in full participation for opportunities due to income, unemployment, health, access or other community conditions that may be disproportionately impacted by environmental harms and risks. *(adapted from U.S. EPA)*
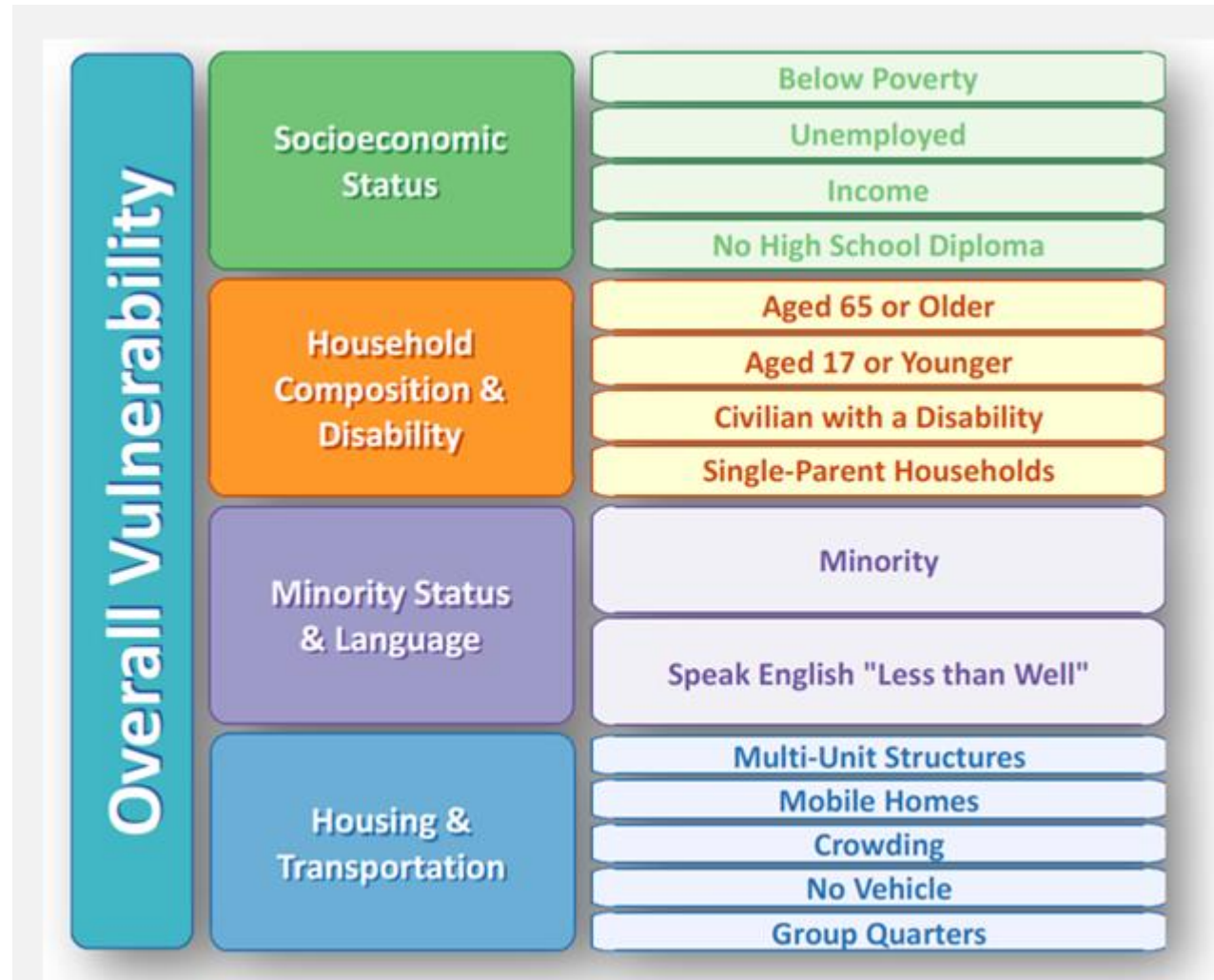
Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Criteria for Underserved Communities

Ohio EPA – Division of Environmental Assistance – State Revolving Fund (SRF)

Criterion	Value
Median household income (MHI) has less than or equal to statewide average	$58,118
Individuals with income below 200% of poverty level greater than or equal to statewide average	30.4%
Unemployment Rate (civilian) greater than or equal to statewide average	5.3%

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Criteria for Underserved Communities

Ohio Department of Health: Health Improvement Zones
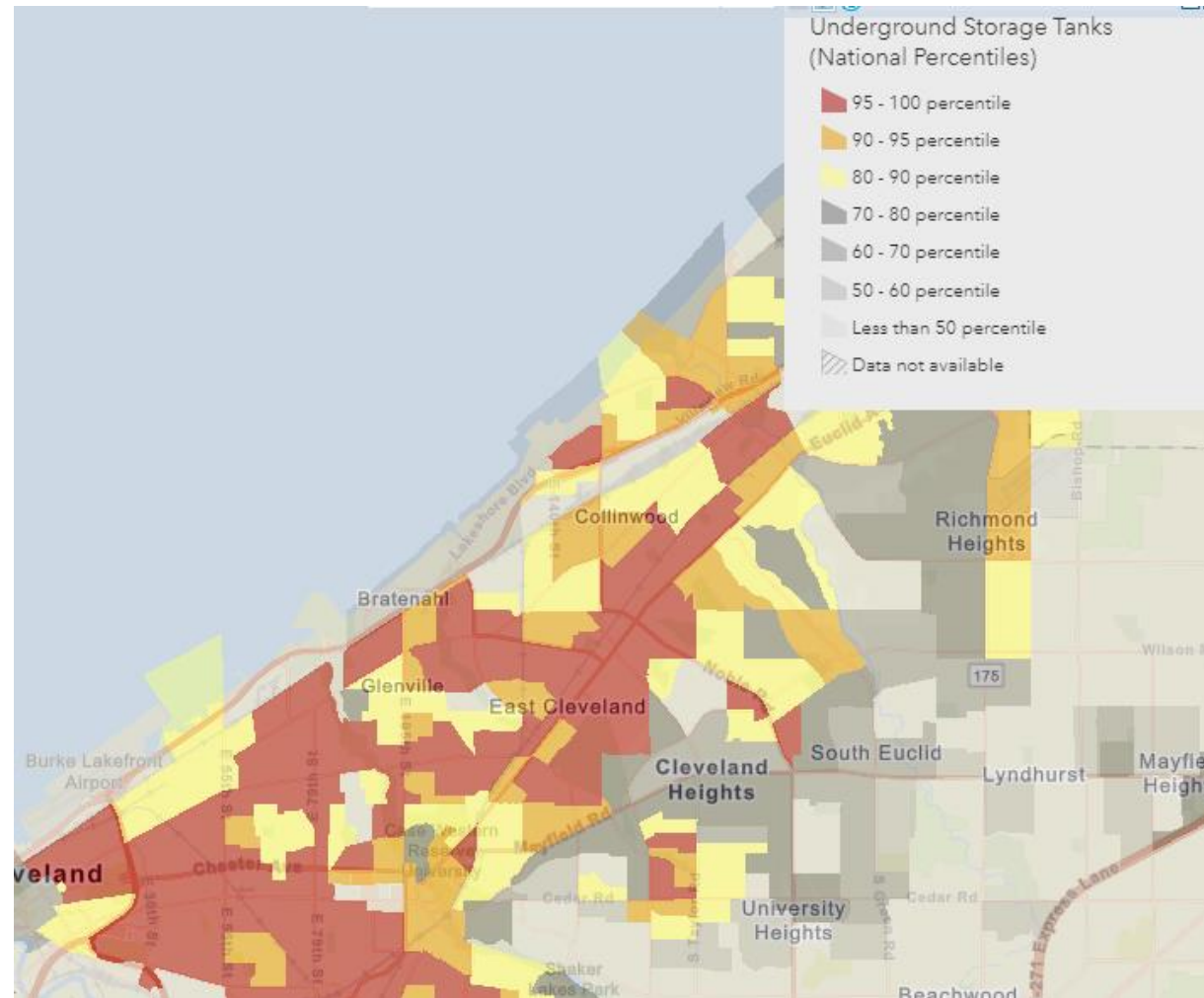
Criteria for Underserved Communities

Ohio Department of Development: Economically Distressed Communities

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Income Survey Toolkit (HUD)

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Criteria for Underserved Communities

U.S.EPA Environmental Screening Tool (EJScreen)

LAKE ERIE COMMUNITIES & COASTAL RESILIENCY GRANT OPPORTUNITY RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

- City of Eastlake
- City of Ashtabula
- Village of Geneva on the Lake
- City of Oak Harbor
- City of Port Clinton
- Jerusalem Township
- Cleveland Metroparks

Total: $609,720

Range: $45,000-$128,000

- Coastal Resiliency Plans
- Design & Engineering
- Implementation

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program

- Establishing Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Programs (GLEJGPs) to be used for issuing and overseeing subawards for environmental restoration projects in underserved Great Lakes communities.

- Funding provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, P.L. 117-58, 2021, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

- Request for Applications (RFA) open now (due 9/15/2023).

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program

From the RFA:

Environmental justice (EJ) is a priority at EPA.

The EPA's Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR) defines EJ as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies".

In addition, Goal 2 of EPA's 2022-2026 EPA Strategic Plan is: *Take Decisive Action to Advance Environmental Justice and Civil Rights*.

Goal 2 represents part of the EPA's fulfillment of Executive Order (EO)13985: *On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*, pursuant to which EPA developed its own EPA Equity Action Plan.

Suggested tools: EJScreen and Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CJEST)

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

State Policy

- Defining fair and equitable for the purpose of engaging Ohioans in environmental policy development
    - Goal, definition, responsibilities, resource list
- May be available yet this calendar year

Ohio Lake Erie Commission

Lake Erie Protection Fund

- Funded through the Lake Erie License Plate program.

- Focuses on projects that will address the Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan nine priorities.

- Funding availability is determined each year through a request for applications each Spring if grants will be issued. Next one will be 2024.

- Grants up to $50,000 can be available but grant amount may vary by grant year.

- Matching dollars are not required but encouraged.

For more information: **https://lakeerie.ohio.gov** (Funding Opportunities)

Contact: Lynn Garrity (**lynn.garrity@lakeerie.ohio.gov**)

Thank you for your attention