This Sustainable Jersey action can be used by a municipality to fulfill components of the 2021 amendment (S-2607) to New Jersey's Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) that requires a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment when updating the land use element of their Master Plan.

Sustainable Jersey is working with support from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to provide short-term guidance on how to use Sustainable Jersey actions, like this one, to advance climate resilience planning, adaptation, and emergency preparedness. Please refer to Sustainable Jersey's Interim Resilience Planning Guidance for more detail and see the updated resources section of the action.

As part of a larger effort, Sustainable Jersey is actively working with NJDEP, New Jersey Future, Rutgers University, ANJEC, the Urban Coast Institute, and additional partners to update actions and develop more detailed guidance to emphasize climate resilience planning as a foundation principle of environmental stewardship and sustainability.

This action assists municipalities, like Highlands, in painting a full picture of diversity in their community by creating a simple demographic and spatial profile, with a focus on identifying residents who are socially vulnerable or who have special communication needs. This action further guides municipalities to investigate, on the one hand, the barriers to communication that these social groups experience, and on the other, the communication channels and social networks they prefer and rely upon to obtain trusted information and to express needs and opinions. Municipalities can put this information and enhanced understanding to use to support more equitable communications, public engagement, and resource allocation.

Through its work with Sustainable Jersey, the Highlands Green Team has gathered the following data and prepared this report for the Borough Council and the Land Use Board.

Notes on statistics presented here:
• The majority of the Community Profile data is from the 2015 and 2020 US Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates data. The ACS is an ongoing survey administered by the US Census Bureau that provides updated data every year. The 5-year estimates are "period" estimates that represent data collected over five years. Sustainable Jersey refers to the period by the year it came out (e.g. 2020 is 2016-2020 and 2015 is 2010-2015). ACS data is best compared five years apart. To learn more about the American Community Survey 5-Year Data, visit: https://www.census.gov/data/developers/data-sets/acs-5year.html
• Municipal Revitalization Index (MRI) data is from New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
• Commercial & Industrial Properties data is from Department of the Treasury - Division of Taxation's Property Tax List (MOD IV) data (https://www.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=102a9bf3c6da4ca3b9b31f831a1e9f72)

Definitions
% Hispanic or Latino Origin - Refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.
Low and Moderate Income (LMI) - According to The US Federal Reserve and other federal and state agencies, a low- and moderate-income community earns less than 80% of median household income. New Jersey's median household Income based on 2020 ACS data was $85,245. Therefore, an LMI municipality is a municipality with a median household income below $68,196.
Municipal Revitalization Index (MRI) Distress Score and Rank - The MRI, developed by New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJ DCA), scores and ranks New Jersey's municipalities according to eight separate indicators that measure diverse aspects of social, economic, physical, and fiscal conditions in each locality.
   • MRI score has a 1 to 100 range. 100 is most distressed; 0 is least distresses.
   • MRI score of 50-75 denotes a moderately distressed municipality; MRI score of 75-100 denotes a highly distressed.
   • MRI rank shows the municipalities in order based on rank: 1 is most distressed, 565 is least distressed.
For more information about the MRI, visit: https://www.nj.gov/dca/home/MuniRevitIndex.html
MRI data is not available for 2015 and 2020, so available data from the closest years was used instead. The 2015 sheet contains MRI data from 2017, and the 2020 sheet contains MRI data from 2019.
Total Housing Units - Housing units can be single-family homes or apartments.
<75% Occupied - If less than 75% of housing units are occupied, a municipality is likely seasonal, a country club, or there are very few people living there. Some of the data for these municipalities is not reliable because the Census collects data from people's primary residences.
Units by Year Structure Built - Shows the number of housing units in a community built between certain years.

Name of Municipality: Borough of Highlands

Date Completed: 7/2/2023

#	Profile Question	Data Breakdown	Enter Values
1)	What is the age distribution of residents? Data Table: 5-year ACS Table B01001	Provide the percentage of residents who are: a) Under 18 years b) Between ages of 18-65 c) Over 65 years	POP = 4746 a) 13.4% b) 63.9% c) 22.7%
2)	What is the racial[1] composition of residents? Date Table: 5-year ACS Table B03002	% residents who identify as: a) Asian b) Black c) White d) Other	a) 1.3% b) 1.9% c) 86.7% d) 10.8%
3)	What is the ethnic[2] composition of residents? Data Table: 5-year ACS Table B03002	% residents who identify as: a) Hispanic or Latino of any race b) White alone, not Hispanic	a) 7.4% b) 92.6%
4)	How many residents are living with a disability? Date Table: 5-year ACS Table S1810	% civilian residents with disabilities (not institutionalized)	10.4%
5)	What is the distribution of household income of residents? Data Table: 5-year ACS Table B19001	% households with incomes within the following categories: a) Under $50,000 b) Between $50,000-$100,000 c) Between $100,000-$200,000 d) Over $200,000	a) 28.6% b) 24.6% c) 29.8% d) 17%
6)	What is the poverty rate? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table S1701	% population (individuals) with income below Federal Poverty Limit	5.7%
7)	How many residents are unemployed? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table DP03	% total population in the labor force[3] without employment	4.3%

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[1] A further breakdown of racial categories (e.g., American Indian or Alaska Native, two or more races) would be informative – if the municipality is of sufficient population for statistical accuracy (see Technical Note above).

[2] Based on the U.S. Census, "ethnicity" refers to "Hispanic or Latino origin," by which is meant a person of Central or South American, Caribbean, Puerto Rican "or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race." This means people who are Hispanic may be of any race.

[3] The labor force includes all adults working or seeking work. It does not include, for example, students without jobs or retirees. Unemployment figures may under-represent economic hardship, because they do not include those who have given up seeking work, those who are involuntarily employed part-time, or people with disabilities that prevent them from working.

8)	Do residents rent or own their homes? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table DP04	a) % households that are renter occupied b) % households that are owner occupied	a) 31% b) 69%
9)	How affordable is home ownership? Data Table: Table B25070 Table B25091	% households for which a) rent is greater than 30% of household income b) mortgage is greater than 30% of household income	No data on census.gov. From City Data: March 2022 cost of living index in Highlands: 120.9 (high, U.S. average is 100) http://www.city-data.com/city/Highlands-New-Jersey.html
10)	Do residents communicate well in English? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table S1601	a) % population age 5 and older speaking English "less than well" b) % population age 5 and older speaking English "less than very well"	4% 0%
11)	What languages besides English do residents communicate in? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table DP02	List additional languages other than English that are spoken at home (top 3 or more)	(i) Indo-European [not Spanish] (ii) Spanish (iii) Other languages (iv) Asian/ Pacific Island Languages (v)
12)	What is the immigration status of residents? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table C16008	a) % not a US citizen b) % foreign-born: non-citizens & citizens by naturalization	a) 7.3% b) 15.8%
13)	What countries do residents originate from? Data Table: 5-Year ACS Table B05006	List the top 3 or more countries from which residents identify their origins POP = 729 B05006**PLACE OF BIRTH FOR THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES**	(i) China 174 (ii) France 172 (iii) El Salvador 56 (iv) Argentina 35 (v) Brazil 35

Name of Municipality: Highlands

Date Completed: 7/15/23

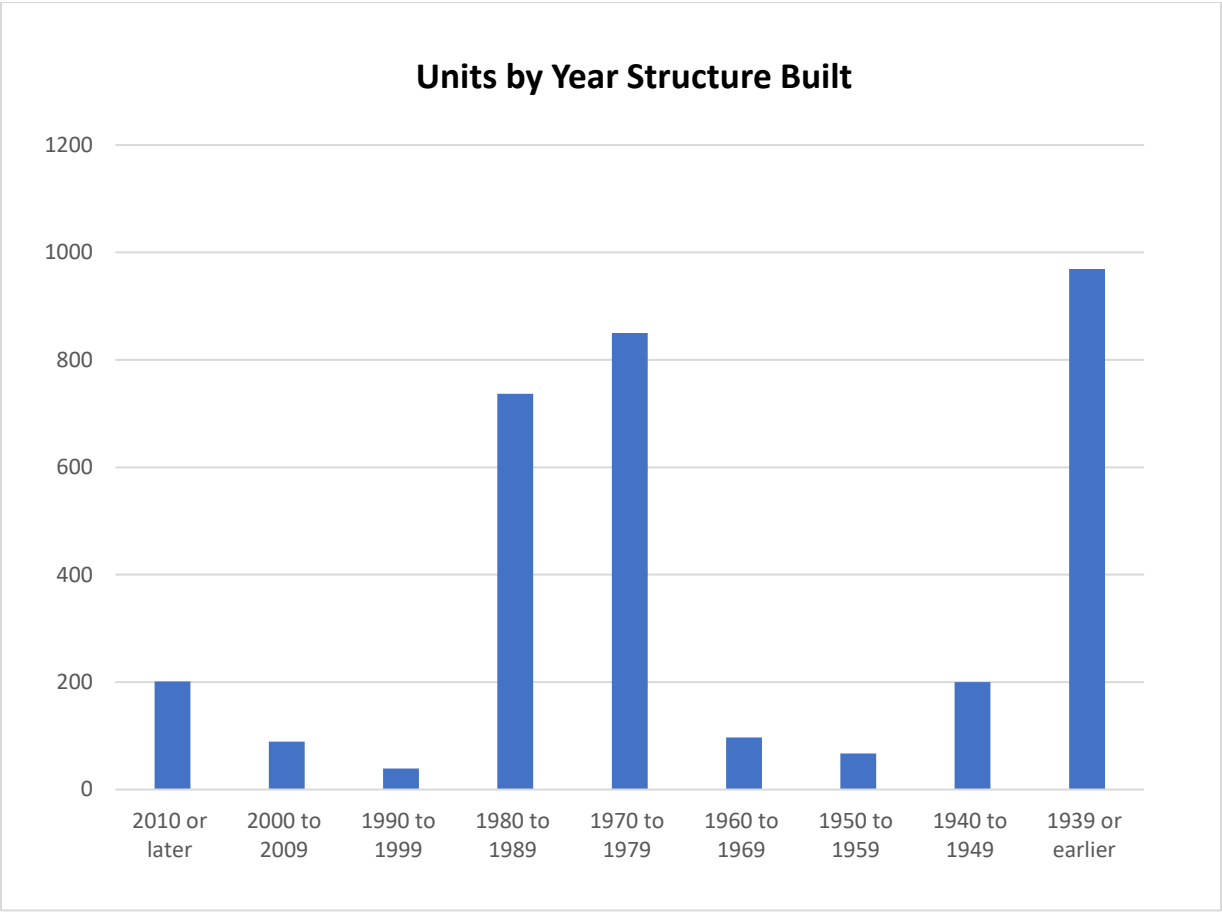| Narrative A				
Describe how and why the listed social groups were identified as vulnerable or marginalized and/or as facing barriers to communication and engagement with the municipality. Include special considerations, such as differences between what the data seem to say and team's local insider knowledge or assumptions.				
From the Vulnerable Populations Exposure Snapshot Report: Social, economic and underlying community conditions - such as the extent to which individuals have access to the services and results of long-standing societal factors (i.e., community underinvestment, racism, and poor representation in decision-making).				
Social Groups (List at least 5)	Communication Barriers & Needs	Communication Channels	Community Organizations & Networks	Leaders/Contact Info
1. Elderly	Lack of access to internet/mobile phones for alerts	Social Media, Borough Website, Borough Mailings	Highlands Recreation Department	recreation@highlandsborough.org
2. Disabled	Hearing, visual, mobility or other impairment	Social Media, Borough Website, Borough Mailings	Sue Molen Health & Human Services	Susan.moleon@co.monmouth.nj.us
3. Low Income	Shift work at odd hours	Social Media, Borough Website, Borough Mailings	Highlands Recreation Department	recreation@highlandsborough.org
4. Speaks English Less than well	Language barriers	Social Media, Borough Website, Borough Mailings	Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey	chamber@shccnj.org
5. Seasonal Renters	Does not know normal town communications	Social Media, Borough Website, Borough Mailings	Highlands Business Partnership	Carla Cefalo hbp@highlandsnj.com
6. Single parent HHS	Need for childcare	Social Media, Borough Website, Borough Mailings	Highlands Recreation Department	recreation@highlandsborough.org
Narrative B				
Key Takeaways: What immediate steps can the municipality take to eliminate barriers to communication and engagement faced by these groups? What are some implications for improving social equity in/through municipal policies, planning, resource prioritization and public engagement?				
In looking at the barriers and channels/networks of communication and engagement for these groups within the community, Highlands should concentrate on a few metrics. Paramount is making all communications [English-Spanish] bi-lingual. Continuing to offer Borough communication across social media and printed mailers in both languages would improve communications a great deal.				

Data over time 2015 to 2020 from ACS [US Census American Community Survey]:

Population Characteristics		
Year	2015	2020
Square Miles	0.7	0.7
Population	4,947	4,746
% White	92%	91%
% Black	2%	1%
% Asian, Pacific Islander, and Hawaiian	1%	4%
% Other	5%	4%
% Hispanic or Latino Origin*	7%	3%
Households	2,530	2,671
Median Household Income	$62,770	$76,263
Percent of Population in Poverty	12.1%	5.3%
Low and Moderate Income*		
NJ DCA MRI Score*	31	34
NJ DCA MRI Rank*	187	156

General Housing Characteristics		
Year	2015	2020
Total Housing Units*	3,420	3,249
Total Occupied Housing Units	2,530	2,671
% Occupied housing units	74%	82%
% Owner-occupied	65%	72%
% Renter-occupied	35%	28%
<75% Occupied*	Yes	No

C&I Properties
Commercial & Industrial Properties (2018 Tax Data)
93 [same 2015 and 2020]

More Community Data:

Units by Year Structure Built

Year Structure Built	Units
2010 or later	~200
2000 to 2009	~90
1990 to 1999	~40
1980 to 1989	~740
1970 to 1979	~850
1960 to 1969	~100
1950 to 1959	~70
1940 to 1949	~200
1939 or earlier	~970

Units by Structure Type
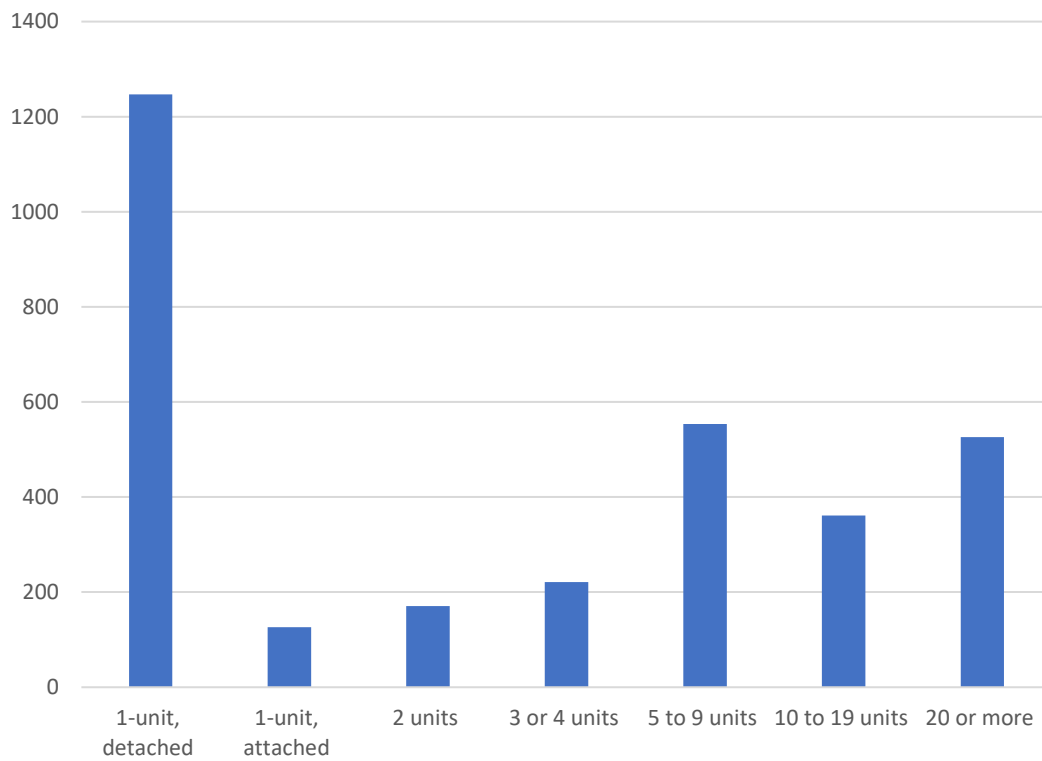
Primary Heating Fuels of Occupied Housing Units (2020)

- Utility gas
- Electricity
- Bottled, tank, or LP gas
- Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.
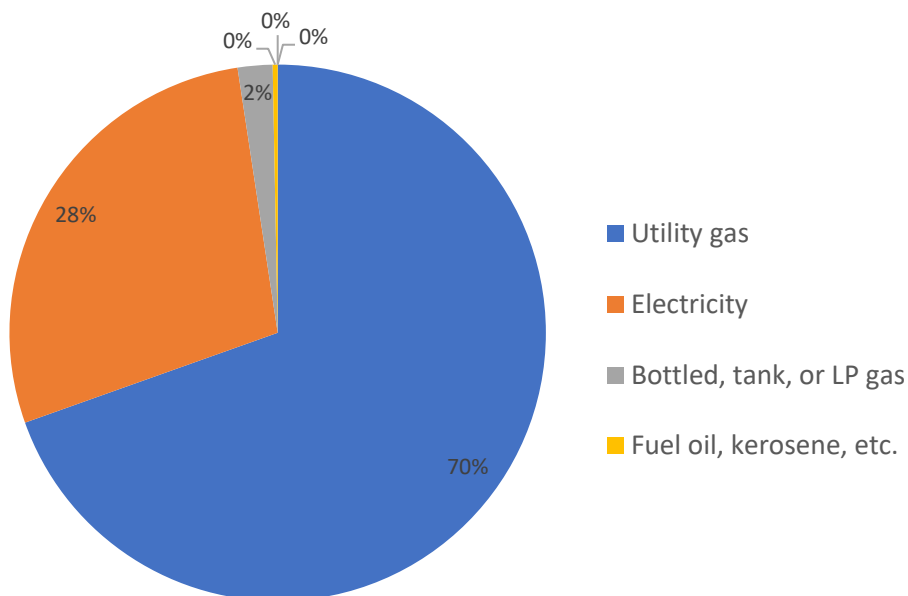
Means of Transportation to Work (2020)

Legend:
- Car, truck, or van
- Public transport
- Taxicab
- Motorcycle
- Bicycle
- Walked

Pie chart values: 73%, 16%, 8%, 1%, 1%, 0%, 0%, 1%
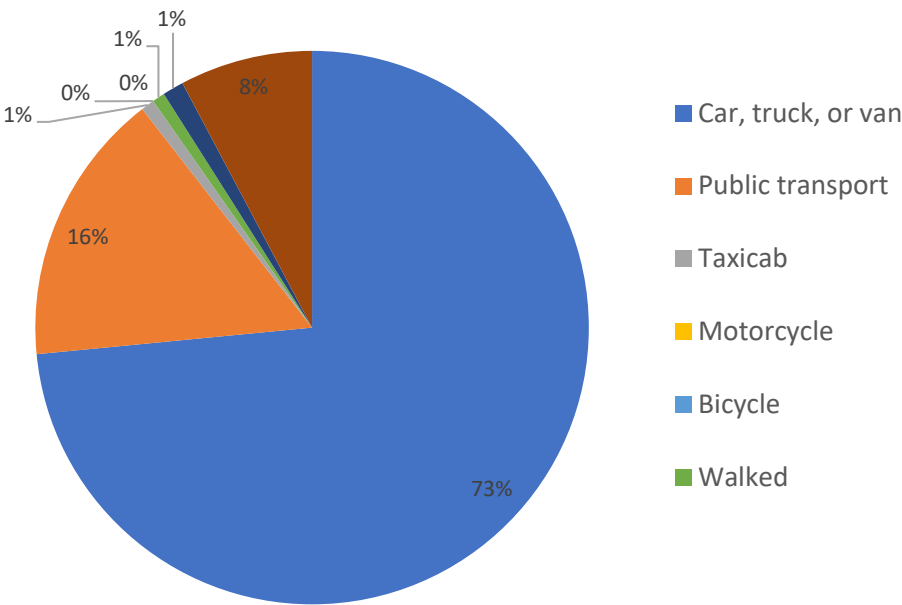
ALICE - an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE), represents the growing number of individuals and families who are working, but are unable to afford the basic necessities of housing, child care, food, transportation, energy, and health care. Highlands ALICE households are between 500 – 1,000 according to the 2020 Census.

ALICE

Tot. ALICE Households

- No Data
- 1 - 500
- 501 - 1,000
- 1,001 - 2,500
- 2,501 - 40,356

Pct. ALICE Households

- No Data
- 7% - 20%
- 20% - 25%
- 25% - 35%
- 35% - 60%
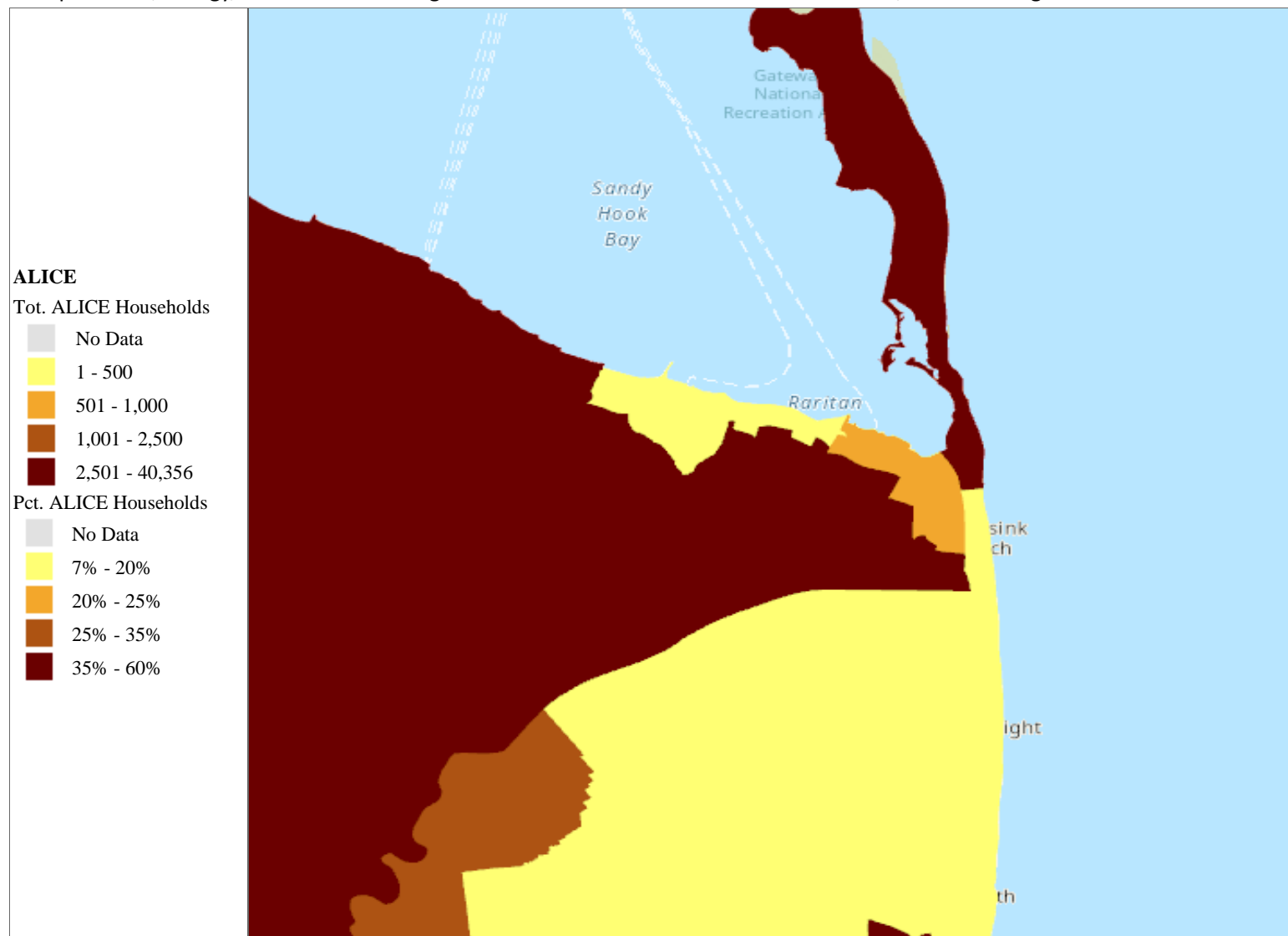
Neighborhoods at Risk:

From: Neighborhoods at Risk by Headwaters Economics	Highlands Combined Census Tracts 8001.01+8001.02	US Percentages
People Under 5 years	7.2%	5.9%
People over 65 years	16.4%	16.0%
People of color [including Hispanic]	18.9%	40.6%
People who do not speak English well	4.3%	4.1%
People without a high school degree	11.7%	11.1%
Families in proverty	5.3%	8.9%
Housing units that are rentals	32.6%	35.4%
Households with no car	9.1%	8.3%
People with disabilities	10.4%	12.6%
People without health insurance	3.5%	8.5%

Overburdened Community Map – Highlands is not an Overburdened Community
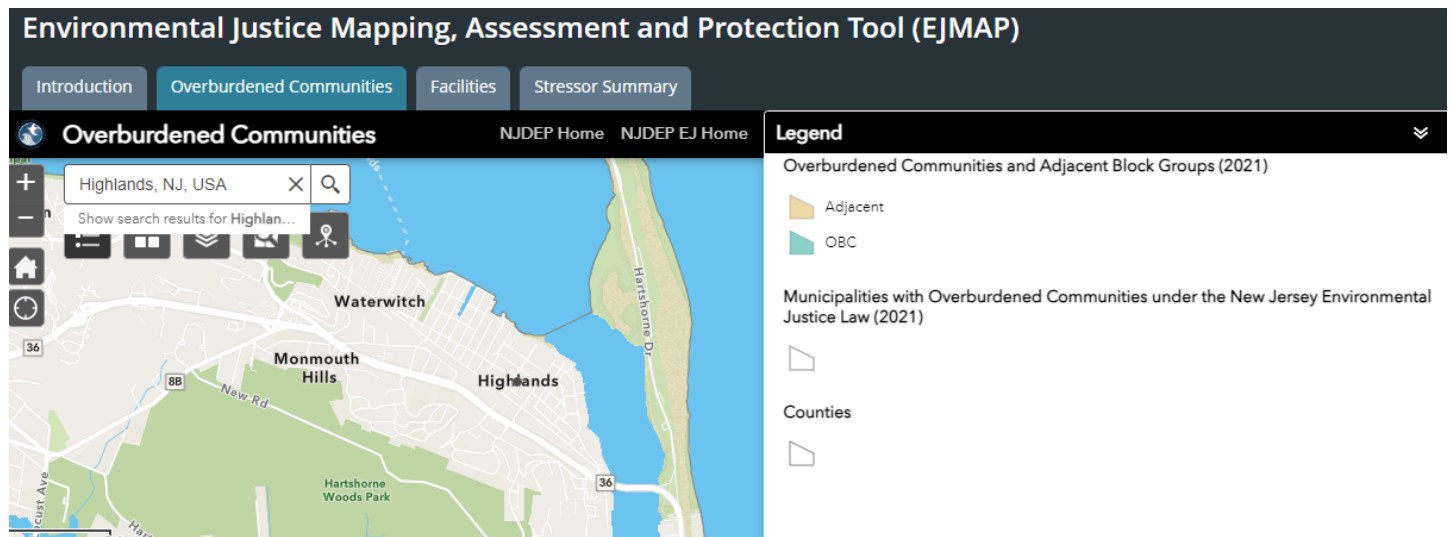
Social Vulnerability Map – Highlands has a low level of vulnerability: