

2015 RURAL BROOME COUNTS REPORT

Executive Summary

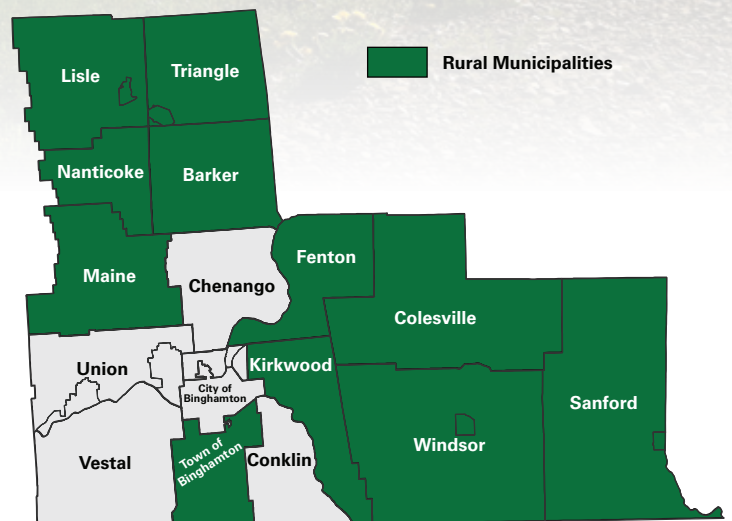
PROJECT OVERVIEW:

Rural Broome Counts is a needs-assets assessment project that examines the 11 rural townships in Broome County. The August 2015 Rural Broome Counts report is an initial assessment that will be updated every three years to track the status of rural Broome County and provide information for other planning efforts. The report is available online at: <http://www.rhnsctny.org/programs/partnerships/rural-broome-counts>.

BACKGROUND:

- Broome County is the largest county by population in South Central New York with 199,928 residents.¹
- Using the New York State Office of Rural Health's definition of *rural*, 46,736 (23.4%) of Broome County's residents live in rural townships.²
- 11 of 16 Broome County townships are considered rural.
- Rural Broome County's population (46,736) is similar to the four rural counties that border Broome (Tioga 51,067; Chenango 50,490; Delaware 47,851; Cortland 49,453).¹

BROOME COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES



REPORT FINDINGS:

Community Participation

- Community members who participated in the Rural Broome Counts Kick-Off Meeting identified rural Broome County's top assets as **community spirit**, **rural schools**, and **natural resources**.
- Community members identified rural Broome County's top challenges as **poverty**, **rural health access**, and **transportation**.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). 2010 U.S. Census. Retrieved from: <http://www.census.gov>.

² New York State Department of Health, Office of Health Systems Management, Division of Health Facility Planning, Charles D. Cook Office of Rural Health. Request for Applications: Rural Health Network Development Program. (2012). Retrieved from: <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/inactive/1207271020/1207271020.pdf>.

Information Barriers

- Broome County is not fully rural, thus a **deficiency of information** aggregated below the county level poses significant data challenges.
- At least **15 definitions** of “rural” and “urban” are used at the federal level, complicating the distinction between the two. (See *Rural – Selected Definitions table*.)

Health Access

- The Harpursville community remains **without a primary care facility**.
- The UHS Lisle primary care clinic closed July 31, 2015, impacting access to care for the rural residents of Lisle, Triangle, Nanticoke, and Barker.

Poverty

- Eastern Rural Broome (Towns of Colesville, Windsor, and Sanford) has the highest: poverty rate, unemployment rate, and percentage of carless households.⁴
- Though rural Broome communities share many similar qualities, each community is unique and should be regarded as such.
- Homelessness is not just an urban issue. Rural Broome school districts are concerned with homeless students and families.

CHALLENGES:

- Each township requires tailored solutions.
- No standard definition of “rural” leads to greatly varying statistics on rural poverty and health.
- Limited health data is available at the ZIP code and township levels.
- No data is available on the number of rural Broome residents who are unable to gain employment due to lack of transportation.

RURAL – SELECTED DEFINITIONS

AGENCY	DEFINITION	BROOME COUNTY
U.S. Census Bureau	Urbanized Areas (UA): at least 50,000 people Urban Cluster (UC): 2,500–50,000 people Both have population density of 1,000 people per square mile (ppl/mi ²) Rural areas are those areas that are not considered Urbanized Areas or Urban clusters. ³	Everything outside of Binghamton, NY UA is Rural. Most Broome County towns are at least partially considered Rural.
U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB)	Counties are classified into the following categories: Metropolitan: urban core of 50,000+ people Nonmetropolitan: - Micropolitan: urban core of 10,000–50,000 people - Noncore: no urban core ³	Broome County is Metropolitan under this definition.
New York State Office of Rural Health	An area can be designated as <i>rural</i> if it is: - A County with population less than 200,000 - A Town with population density less than 200 people per square mile ²	Barber, Binghamton, Colesville, Fenton*, Kirkwood, Lisle, Maine, Nanticoke, Sanford, Triangle, and Windsor are all considered rural. <i>*Under 250 ppl/mi²</i>

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Urge healthcare providers to document patients’ place of residency on the ZIP code and township levels.
- Encourage employment agencies to collect data on applicants’ methods of transportation.
- Expand mobile services, technology, information, and communication tools to improve access in rural areas.
- Collect data on the number and type of jobs in the rural Broome townships.
- Promote understanding of complexities surrounding rural designations and degrees of rurality.
- Engage rural residents to self-advocate for their own community.

Special thanks to United Way of Broome County, Rural Broome Counts Advisory Committee, transportation work group members, key informant interviewees, AmeriCorps VISTA, Rural Health Service Corps, NYS Office of Rural Health, and rural Broome residents.



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³ Cromartie, J., & Bucholtz, S. (2008). Defining the “Rural” in Rural America: The use of different definitions of rural by Federal agencies reflects the multidimensional qualities of rural America. USDA, Economic Research Service. Amber Waves. Retrieved from: <http://ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2008-june/defining-the-%E2%80%9C9Crural%E2%80%9D-in-rural-america.aspx>.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from: <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>.