

2015 RURAL BROOME COUNTS REPORT

CHALLENGE: Transportation

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: www.rhnsny.org/programs/partnerships/rural-broome-counts

Quick Facts: 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*, 11 of 16 Broome County townships are considered rural.² 46,736 (23.4%) of Broome County's residents live in rural townships.¹

Community members who participated in the Rural Broome Counts Kick-Off identified transportation as one of rural Broome County's top three challenges.

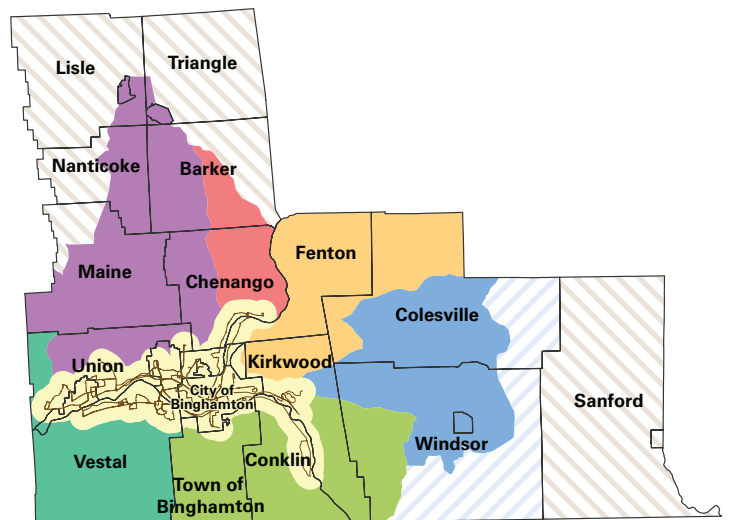
Access to employment, as well as to goods and services, often requires travel within rural areas and into the urban center.

Lack of affordable, reliable transportation is a barrier to rural viability and prosperity.

REPORT FINDINGS:

- A serious **transportation inequity** exists between rural Broome and the rest of the county.
- Rural Broome County has **few affordable transportation services**.
- The number of emergency medical services (EMS) volunteers and ambulance services in rural areas is in decline.
- Inappropriate use of non-emergency EMS **increases cost and response time** for true medical emergencies.

BROOME COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION MAP



BC Country Service Areas

- | | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 401 (Whitney Point) | 404 (Conklin/Kirkwood) | Travels to 402 |
| 402 (Windsor/Harpursville) | 405 (Vestal) | Can Travel to Service Area |
| 403 (Port Crane) | 406 (Chenango Forks) | BC Lift |
| | | Fixed Routes |

English, Douglas. (2013). B.C. Country: Serving Rural Broome County. GIS and Mapping Services, Broome County Department of Planning. Retrieved from: <http://www.ridebctransit.com/transit/bccountry>.

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>.



A Deposit Foundation volunteer driver drops off a Deposit resident in Binghamton for a health care appointment.

CHALLENGES:

- Existing public transportation services in rural Broome are **limited and inconvenient**, while private transportation services are **expensive**.
- Little information regarding employment and unemployment exists at the township and/or ZIP code levels.
- Lack of information** makes it difficult to target affordable, employment-oriented transportation services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Encourage Broome County public transportation to adopt the best features of a reservation-based system and a fixed route system to increase access and ridership.
- Develop ride sharing, van pooling, and car sharing services.
- Add park and rides in rural village centers to serve as common pick up points.
- Expand utilization of the GetThere Call Center and similar transportation information and coordination services.
- Identify areas in which Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant paratransit services are unavailable.
- Encourage health and human service providers to use technology connecting transportation services to riders in real time.
- Include transportation information when establishing a patient's electronic medical records.
- Promote entrepreneurship and social enterprises creating transportation-related services and employment.

TOOL TO ASSESS TRANSPORTATION VULNERABILITY

Below is an example of a specific strategy that can be utilized to survey transportation vulnerability.

Which of the following is most true?

- A. I have access to a dependable vehicle or public transportation.
- B. I have some, yet limited, transportation options (undependable personal vehicle, lack income for gas, maintenance/repairs, licensure/registration & insurance).
- C. I lack access to a personal vehicle or public transportation for most of my mobility needs including: employment, education/training, healthy foods/shopping, medical or social service appointments.

A responses indicate **Transportation Independence**.

B responses indicate **Transportation Vulnerability**.

C responses indicate **Transportation Dependence**.

FURTHER RESEARCH:

- Engage job training and employment services and employers' human resource departments to better understand the impact of transportation on employment, quality of employment, and retention.
- Consider addressing the increasing need for door-through-door transportation for seniors and individuals with diverse abilities. This service includes going into a residence or facility, to assist the rider with mobilizing to and into the vehicle.
- Continue research on inappropriate rural EMS transportation use for non-emergency needs.
- Research public transit systems serving rural populations of comparable size and adopt their best practices.

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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