

2016 RURAL BROOME COUNTS HOUSING SUPPLEMENT

CHALLENGE: Housing

Rural Broome Counts is a needs-assets assessment project that examines the 11 rural townships in Broome County. The assessment, initially released in August 2015, will be updated every three years to track the status of rural Broome County and provide information for other planning efforts. This year, the Rural Broome Counts team expanded upon the report to include a housing supplement which looks specifically at the unique barriers and opportunities that surround housing within rural Broome County. All reports are available online at:

www.rhnsctny.org/programs/partnerships/rural-broome-counts

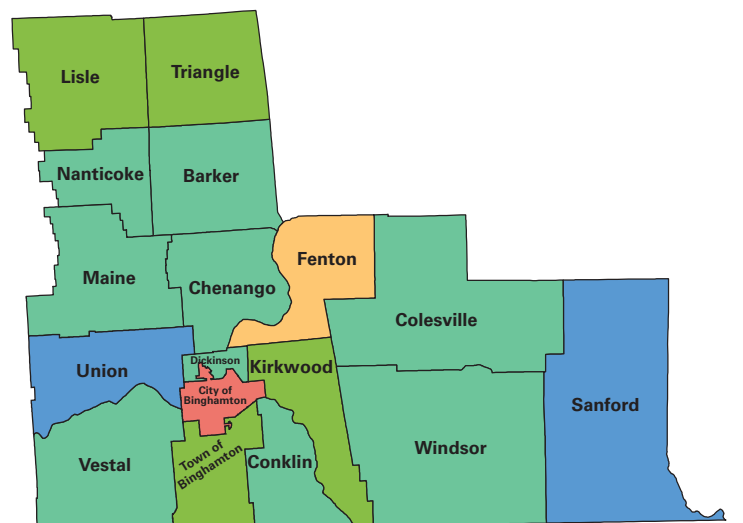
Quick Facts: Broome County is the largest county by population in South Central New York with 199,928 residents.¹ Using the New York State Office of Rural Health's definition of *rural*, 11 of 16 Broome County townships are considered rural.² 46,736 (23.4%) of Broome County's residents live in rural townships.¹

The initial Rural Broome Counts report scratched the surface when looking at poverty. A closer look revealed the relationship between affordable housing and living in poverty, thus prompting the housing supplement. Safe, affordable housing is paramount to ensuring the health, safety, and prosperity of rural communities.

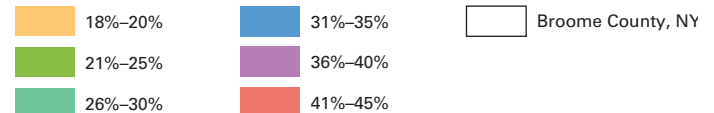
REPORT FINDINGS:

- In rural Broome County, over 4,000 households (24%) are **cost-burdened** by their housing expenses.³
- In rural Broome County, 18% of the housing stock was built prior to 1940, while 21% of the housing stock is either in fair or poor condition. From **aging, substandard housing to water wells and septic systems**, rural Broome residents must consider several additional factors distinct from their urban/suburban counterparts in the pursuit of safe, healthy living conditions.
- Both multi-family housing (9%) and manufactured homes (18%) are important sources of **affordable housing in rural areas**.
- Instead of residing on the streets or in shelters, **the rural homeless** are more likely than their urban/suburban counterparts to stay with friends and family or

COST-BURDENED HOMEOWNERS IN BROOME COUNTY³



All Households % Cost-Burdened



Date: 6/28/2016
 Author: Emily Hotchkiss
 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, Broome County GIS, esri.

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. (2010). *Request for Applications: Rural Health Network Development Program*. Retrieved from: <https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/inactive/1207271020/1207271020.pdf>.

³ Cost-burdened is defined as spending more than 30% of household income on housing related expenses.



This mobile home just received window replacements through the Weatherization Assistance Program administered by Tioga Opportunities. The residence is in a condition typical of many Broome County mobile homes, yet is still in need of skirting, roofing, and other repair work.

live in a variety of remote locations. This makes the rural homeless more difficult to locate.

- Broome County possesses a number of housing advocacy groups with different agendas, target populations, and goals.

CHALLENGES:

- Because the rural homeless are more difficult to locate, Broome County has little infrastructure to support those faced with housing insecurity in rural areas.
- Multi-family housing and manufactured housing are often restricted by local zoning ordinances in rural areas.
- A flurry of foreclosures and abandoned properties currently plague Broome County, fueling the growth of **“zombie properties.”** (*Zombie properties are homes that have been abandoned by their owners.*)
- A limited familiarity with one’s rights leaves individuals **susceptible to exploitation** by landlords and lenders alike.
- Low availability of rental units in rural areas is a barrier to affordable housing.
- Manufactured homes are a low cost option for rural families, however they rapidly depreciate in value, leaving these rural residents with fewer assets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Foster relationships with local housing agencies as well as fellow rural municipalities to expand housing services into rural communities.
- Invest in public water and sewage systems in and around rural villages to facilitate the development of needed apartment complexes and congregate care facilities.

- Adopt more inclusionary zoning policies to allow the development of more multi-family housing and manufactured housing.
- Increase resources for the rural homelessness to both engage this population and better understand their needs.
- Enhance communication among local housing advocacy groups for a larger collective impact on the local housing environment.
- Educate residents of their rights as tenants or homeowners to help curb the amount of substandard housing, illegal evictions, and even foreclosures.
- Integrate housing insecurity screening tools (as seen below) into Primary Care Practices work flow to identify housing needs and make referrals for assistance if indicated.

QUESTIONS TO ASSESS HOUSING INSECURITY	RESPONSES
During the last 12 months, was there a time when (you/you and your family) were not able to pay your mortgage, rent or utility bills? ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know
During the last 12 months, did you or your children move in with other people even for a little while because you could not afford to pay your mortgage, rent, or utility bills? ⁴	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know
Do you ever worry about losing your place to live? ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely
Do you (ever) have difficulty making ends meet at the end of the month? ⁵	<input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Rarely

Special thanks to United Way of Broome County, Rural Broome Counts Housing Work Group, key informant interviewees, AmeriCorps VISTA, Rural Health Service Corps, NYS Office of Rural Health, and rural Broome residents.



Rural Health Network of South Central New York, Inc.
 PO Box 416, 2663 Main Street, Whitney Point, NY 13862
 Phone: (607) 692-7669, Toll Free: 1-888-603-5973
www.rhnsny.org

⁴ Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan. (1999). *National Survey of America's Families*.

⁵ Brcic, V., Eberdt, C., and J. Kaczorowski. (2011). *Development of a Tool to Identify Poverty in a Family Practice Setting: A Pilot Study*. Int J Family Med.