

# Barriers to Basic Needs: Housing & Jobs Methodology

## Barriers to Housing

- We used definitions and data from HUD to understand housing affordability in Dutchess County. We sought to identify areas where housing costs made up more than 30 percent of estimated household income. The 30 percent threshold is a generally accepted measure of burden when looking at housing costs as a share of income – though we acknowledge that it’s not a perfect measure of burden, as other factors such as income relative to the area, family size and makeup, and other costs (e.g., food and transportation) influence a household’s ability to afford housing (or their ability to absorb higher housing costs).
- Based on our review of available data, we felt HUD’s [Community Planning Development \(CPD\)](#) datasets gave us the best look at housing cost burdens. Our Community Development colleagues at County Planning also recommended its use for this analysis.
- The CPD data shows HUD’s estimation of the percent of households paying more than 30 percent of income on housing at the Census tract level. Although the data is based on the older 2017-2021 American Community Survey (ACS), it still provides the most uniform measure of affordability at the tract level.
- Realizing that every tract has households spending more than 30 percent of income on housing – meaning it’s a ubiquitous condition – we wanted to call out those tracts that had the highest share of households experiencing a cost burden. For us, that turned our focus to tracts that had half or more of their households exceeding the 30 percent threshold. We classified these tracts as our ‘most cost burdened’ communities and they included seven tracts:
  - Census Tract 1402.01– Town of Poughkeepsie (Arlington area)
  - Census Tract 1403.01– Town of Poughkeepsie (Arlington area)
  - Census Tract 2201.02 – City of Poughkeepsie
  - Census Tract 2202.01 – City of Poughkeepsie
  - Census Tract 2203.00 – City of Poughkeepsie
  - Census Tract 2211.00 – City of Poughkeepsie
  - Census Tract 3000.00 – Village of Wappingers Falls
- We mapped the CPD’s cost burden data, which you can see on the [Barriers to Basic Needs map](#). We then overlaid the mapping work done for the Barriers to Safe Access and Reliable Access analyses to identify any connections between our most cost burdened communities and transportation barriers. We describe the results of the analysis in the plan, but in summary, we found a range of access barriers in these communities.

## Barriers to Jobs

- We relied on data from the Census Bureau’s [Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics](#) (LEHD) program to understand the location of jobs in Dutchess County. This data provides basic information about employers, such as the total number of jobs and their industry classification. It also provides the locations of these employers, which we used to find job centers and clusters and to help identify potential access barriers. Two downsides with the data is the exclusion of self-employed workers and the grouping of employees at administrative headquarters (the latter can mask the true location of job sites).
- For the plan, we used the 2023 LEHD dataset that was released in December 2025, and extracted the geographic data from the Census Bureau’s [On The Map](#) portal.
- After importing the data into our local GIS, we performed a general quality check of the point locations and attributes, particularly focusing on the geographical accuracy of known job centers (major employers like IBM in Poughkeepsie). We found that some points were not actually located at known job sites. Based on our research, this is not uncommon, as the Census Bureau uses data suppression tools to protect employer privacy. Understanding this, we chose to use a job density heat map to show job data.
- Since the density map lends itself to an area level analysis, we did not perform a street level, proximity type of analysis as done in the Education, Goods & Services, and Recreation sections. But the heat map did allow us to capture both job centers – places with large single employers, and job clusters – places with many small employers.
- Much like the housing analysis, we overlayered our analyses of transportation safety and reliability data to see if there were any access barriers to jobs. And much like our look at housing, we found job locations that had safety and reliability barriers.