

**USDA Economic Research Service
2000 Rural-Urban Commuting Area Codes
Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency
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The Rural-Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) codes classification system is used to delineate settlement patterns based on Census Tracts. The codes use the same theoretical concepts developed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to define county-level Metropolitan Statistical Areas* (Metro) since 1950 and county-level Micropolitan Statistical Areas (Micro) since 2003. Measures of population density, urbanization, and daily commuting are used to identify urban cores and adjacent territory that is economically integrated with those cores.

Each census tract is categorized into one of the following core areas (tracts must have more than 30 percent of their population within the area): Urban Area with 50,000 or more people (Metropolitan), Large Urban Cluster of 10,000 to 49,999 people (Micropolitan), Small Urban Cluster of 2,500 to 9,999 people (Small Town), or Rural Area of less than 2,500 people.

Each Census tract is further defined by primary and secondary commuting pattern codes.

The primary codes define the primary (single largest) commuting flow share by core area: A) Within - primary commuting is within the core, B) High - =>30% of primary commuting is to the core, C) Low - <30% of primary commuting is to the core, and D) Rural - primary commuting is only within rural areas.

The secondary codes define the second largest commuting flow share and can be used to further identify important, potentially urbanizing zones. For example, the 1.1 codes identify areas where the primary flow is within a metropolitan core, but an additional 30 percent or more commute to an even larger metropolitan core. Similarly code 10.1 identifies Rural areas for which the primary commuting share is Rural (local), but more than 30 percent also commute to an Urban Area.

* A Metropolitan Statistical Area (Metro) includes one or more counties containing a Core Urban Area of 50,000 or more people, together with any adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration as measured by commuting to work with the Core Urban Area. A Micropolitan Statistical Area (Micro) must have an Urban Cluster between 10,000 and 49,999 people.

Urban Areas (population of 50,000 or more) and Urban Clusters (population of 2,500 to 49,999) encompass densely settled territory, which consists of:

- Core census block groups or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile.
- Surrounding census blocks that have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile.
- Under certain conditions, less densely settled territory maybe part of each UA or UC.