



Columbus, GA Enviromental Scan

Selected Area:

Columbus, GA

Comparison Area:

Georgia

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About the Report: Environmental Scan of Our Community

This Environmental Scan has been assembled to provide an insightful overview of the socio-economic and educational landscape of Columbus Technical College's community. By delving into the various demographics such as population, race, age, gender, and commuting trends, CTC hopes to gain a multi-faceted perspective of the community's makeup.

The report also delves into important issues of socio-economic wellbeing, like the prevalence of poverty, educational attainment levels, and housing affordability. A particular focus has been placed on individuals with less than a high school diploma and those whose housing costs (mortgage or rent) exceed 30% of their income, recognizing these as potential indicators of vulnerability.

Included is a detailed K-12 worksheet that captures the trajectory of high school graduates and their enrollment in Columbus Technical College, allowing CTC to map educational progression within the community. The College also analyzes the inflow and outflow of people who live and work in Columbus, GA, and those who commute from outside the community.

The granular data is further broken down by census tract (or neighborhood), allowing the College to understand the varying conditions across different parts of Columbus' community. This includes educational attainment, poverty prevalence, public assistance recipients, employment status, and housing costs.

The primary purpose of this report is to highlight vulnerable populations and neighborhoods that Columbus Technical College may wish to target for recruitment. By recognizing areas where educational resources may be lacking, CTC can better strategize our outreach and support efforts.

In addition to this, the report can serve multiple purposes:

Policy Development: The data in this report can aid in creating informed policies aimed at improving educational access and attainment.

Strategic Planning: By understanding the demographics and trends within the community, CTC can tailor future plans to meet the specific needs and circumstances of potential students.

Resource Allocation: The report can help decide where resources would have the most impact, thus ensuring that funding and support are utilized in the most effective and efficient manner.

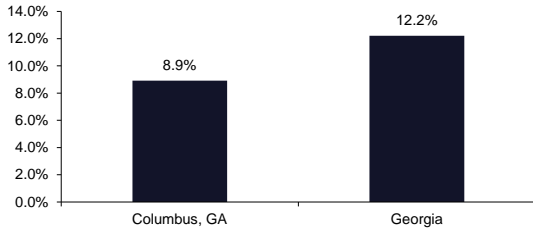
Stakeholder Communication: This report can serve as an excellent resource for communication with stakeholders, offering a comprehensive snapshot of the community's current state and where potential growth and development can occur.

The OIER believes that with this report, CTC is arming itself with valuable knowledge that can be used to enhance the college's community engagement, outreach strategies, and overall institutional effectiveness. The ultimate goal being to foster an environment where education is accessible and achievable for all members of our community.

Columbus, GA Demographic Make-up

Popul:

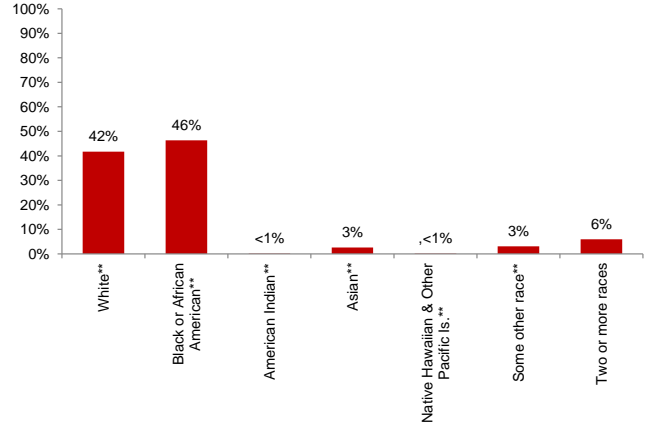
Percent Change in Population, 2010*-2021*



From 2010* to 2021*, Columbus, GA had an **8.9%** (16,737) change in population. Columbus Total Population as of 2021 is 204,366.

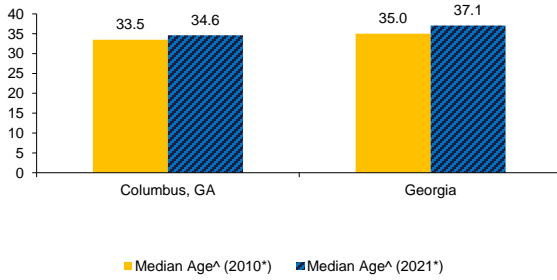
Race

Population by Race, Percent of Total, Columbus, GA, 2021*



Age

Median Age, 2010* & 2021*

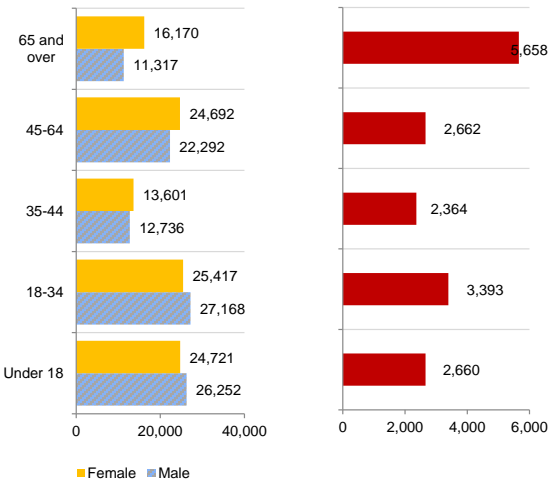


From 2010* to 2021*, Columbus, GA's median age increased from **34** to **35**. The median age demonstrates that half of the population is above the age of 35 and the other half is below. The median age is one indicator of whether the population is getting older or younger.

Age and Gender

2021* Breakout

Change 2010*-2021*

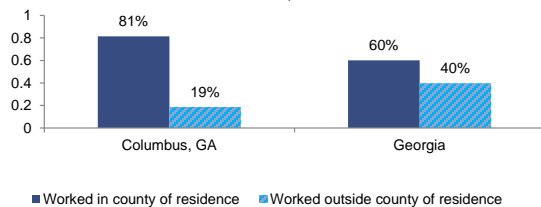


In 2021*, the age category with the highest estimate for number of women was **18-34 (25,417)**, and the age category with the highest estimate for number of men was **18-34 (27,168)**.

From 2010* to 2021*, the age category with the largest estimated increase was **65 and over (5,658)**, and the age category with the smallest estimated increase was **35-44 (2,364)**.

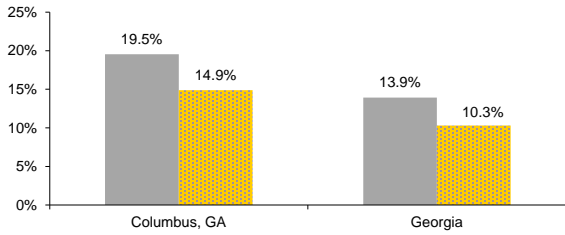
Commuting

Place of Work, 2021*



Poverty Prevalence

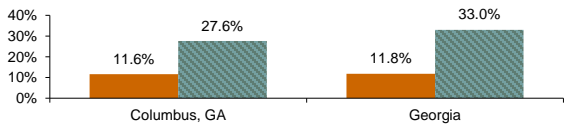
Individuals & Families Below Poverty, 2021*



■ People Below Poverty ■ Families below poverty

In the 2017-2021 period, Columbus, GA had the highest estimated percent of individuals living below poverty (19.5%), and Georgia had the lowest (13.9%).

Educational Attainment, 2021*

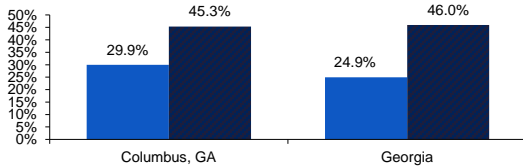


■ No high school degree ■ Bachelor's degree or higher

Total No high school degree- Columbus, GA

Housing Affordability

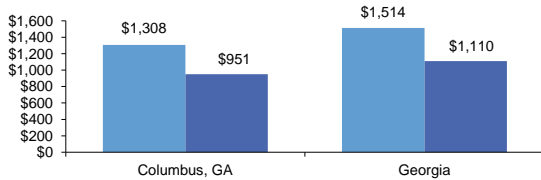
Housing Costs as a Percent of Household Income, 2021*



■ Cost >30% of household income ■ Rent >30% of household income

Columbus, GA has the largest share of rental units (51.5%).

Median Monthly Mortgage Costs and Gross Rent, 2021*



■ Median monthly mortgage cost, 2021* ■ Median gross rent, 2021*

CTC's Demographics Overview worksheet provides an encompassing look at the Greater Columbus area's demographic composition, presenting data on population, age, gender, race, commuting trends, poverty prevalence, educational attainment, and housing affordability. The overview benchmarks these indicators against the state of Georgia for a comparative analysis.

Columbus has seen considerable growth over the past decade, experiencing a **9%** increase in population since 2010, signaling a vibrant and expanding community. The racial composition of Columbus is fairly balanced, with White residents accounting for **42%** of the population, and African American residents making up a slightly higher proportion at **46%**. This demographic mix provides a diverse community fabric.

In terms of age distribution, the median age in Columbus as of 2021 is **35** years old. The age group with the highest estimated number for both men and women is the 18-34 bracket, indicating a relatively young population that brings a dynamic energy to our community. From 2010 to 2021, the age category showing the most significant growth was the 65 and over bracket, signaling an increasing older population that brings different needs and opportunities. On the other hand, the age group 35-44 showed the smallest estimated increase over this period.

Turning to socioeconomic indicators, Columbus has a **20%** individual poverty rate and a **15%** family poverty rate, which are figures the community diligently works to reduce. Educational attainment is a critical lever in this effort, and the data shows that **12%** of Columbus residents do not have a high school diploma. Efforts to reduce this figure and improve education outcomes could significantly contribute to reducing poverty rates.

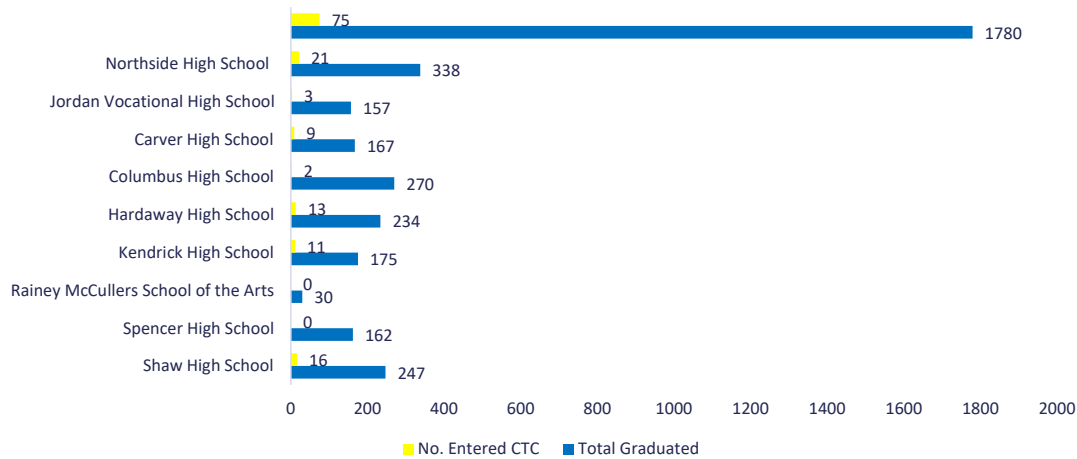
Housing affordability, a key indicator of economic wellbeing, shows some potential challenges. As of 2021, **30%** of homeowners in Columbus spend more than 30% of their income on their mortgage, and a more substantial **45%** of renters spend over 30% of their income on rent. These figures suggest that a significant proportion of the community may be housing cost-burdened, which could impact their ability to invest in education or other areas of personal growth.

The Demographics Overview worksheet presents a holistic portrait of the Greater Columbus area's population. By understanding these trends and dynamics, Columbus Technical College and other stakeholders can work more effectively to address community needs, unlock potential, and contribute to Columbus's continued growth and prosperity.

HS Grads Entered CTC Fall 2022

County	Service Area HS	Total Graduated	No. Entered CTC	% of HS Graduates who Entered CTC Fall '22	Overall % of Service Area HS Graduates Entering CTC	No. of Dual Enrolled Students Fall '22
Muscogee County	Shaw High School	247	16	6%	1%	34
Muscogee County	Spencer High School	162	0	0%	0%	0
Muscogee County	Rainey McCullers School of the Arts	30	0	0%	0%	0
Muscogee County	Kendrick High School	175	11	6%	1%	9
Muscogee County	Hardaway High School	234	13	6%	1%	36
Muscogee County	Columbus High School	270	2	1%	0%	1
Muscogee County	Carver High School	167	9	5%	1%	16
Muscogee County	Jordan Vocational High School	157	3	2%	0%	42
Muscogee County	Northside High School	338	21	6%	1%	0
Total		1780	75	4%	4%	138

Columbus, GA HS Grads that Entered CTC Fall 2022



The OIER analyzed graduate data from the Georgia Department of Education for AY 2021-2022 and determined there were **1780** graduates from high schools within the Columbus, GA. From these 1780 graduates, **75** of these graduates enrolled at CTC for Fall 2022(202312), representing **4%** of the total high school graduates from high schools within the community. For comparison, the OIER also analyzed KMS report TEC0224 data of 'current' dual enrolled students from Columbus' high schools. For Fall 2022 (202312), CTC had a total of **138** current Muscogee County high schools students enrolled representing **63** (184%) more students than recent high school graduates.

The OIER also analyzed TEC 0129 Financial Aid Fund Types. The second worksheet within this workbook represents the types of financial aid available and received by recent HS graduates. The types of financial aid are as follows: HOPE, Local Scholarships, Pell, Veterans Administration, WIA, and Other Financial Aid. Of the 75 recent HS graduates from Muscogee County that entered CTC Fall 2022, **27 (36%)** were full-time and **48 (64%)** were part-time. **53** students received Pell, **0** received WIA, **5** received VA benefits, **0** received Vocational Rehab, **43** received HOPE, and **0** received Local Scholarships.

All 75 students were awarded financial assistance to cover their tuition fees. At CTC, tuition is charged at a rate of \$100 per credit hour, in addition to a \$321 fee per class (as of this semester; fees are expected to increase to \$356 in Fall 2023). For a full-time student, the total cost of tuition and fees amounts to \$1521. Although CTC lacks information on the remaining 1705 of the 1780 recent graduates who opted to attend a four-year university or join the military, selecting CTC as an educational institution provides a practical and economical path to acquiring qualifications for achieving sustainable income.

This data analysis assists CTC in identifying where opportunities exist to increase enrollment and better serve the community. By understanding these trends and acting upon this knowledge, CTC can bolster its position as a crucial provider of accessible, high-quality technical education within Columbus.

Inflow/Outflow Report

Selection Area Labor Market Size (All Jobs)

	2020	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	84,129	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area	67,997	80.8%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	16,132	-

In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (All Jobs)

	2020	
	Count	Share
Living in the Selection Area	67,997	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	43,068	63.3%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	24,929	36.7%

In-Area Employment Efficiency (All Jobs)

	2020	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	84,129	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	43,068	51.2%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	41,061	48.8%

Outflow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)

	2020	
	Count	Share
External Jobs Filled by Residents	24,929	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	6,390	25.6%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	13,537	54.3%
Workers Aged 55 or older	5,002	20.1%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	7,555	30.3%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	9,518	38.2%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	7,856	31.5%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	4,389	17.6%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	6,460	25.9%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	14,080	56.5%

Inflow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)

	2020	
	Count	Share
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	41,061	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	9,413	22.9%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	22,446	54.7%
Workers Aged 55 or older	9,202	22.4%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	10,236	24.9%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	13,687	33.3%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	17,138	41.7%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	5,116	12.5%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	6,992	17.0%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	28,953	70.5%

Interior Flow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)

	2020	
	Count	Share
Internal Jobs Filled by Residents	43,068	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	9,484	22.0%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	23,437	54.4%
Workers Aged 55 or older	10,147	23.6%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	11,582	26.9%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	16,499	38.3%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	14,987	34.8%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	4,700	10.9%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	4,975	11.6%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	33,393	77.5%

Home Destination Report - Where Workers Live Who are Employed in the Selection Area - by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.)

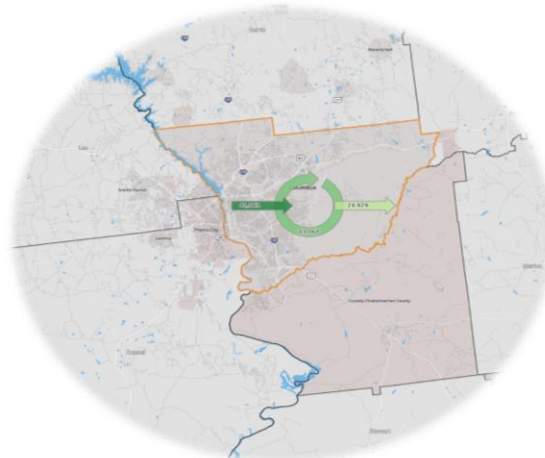
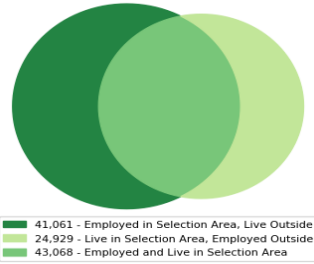
Total All Jobs

	2020	
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	84,129	100.0%

Jobs Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers Live - All Jobs

	2020	
	Count	Share
Columbus city, GA	43,068	51.2%
Phenix City city, AL	5,173	6.1%
Auburn city, AL	723	0.9%
Smiths Station city, AL	685	0.8%
LaGrange city, GA	511	0.6%
Atlanta city, GA	486	0.6%
Cusseta-Chattahoochee County unified government, GA	486	0.6%
Albany city, GA	476	0.6%
Macon-Bibb County, GA	419	0.5%
Opelika city, AL	377	0.4%
All Other Locations	31,725	37.7%

Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2020



Note: Overlay arrows do not indicate directionality of worker flow between home and employment locations.

- ➔ Employed and Live in Selection Area
- ➔ Employed in Selection Area, Live Outside
- ➔ Live in Selection Area, Employed Outside

51% of residents living in Columbus, GA work in Columbus, GA. 49% people live outside Columbus, GA but work inside of Columbus, GA.

The inflow and outflow of a community can provide valuable insights into several facets of community dynamics and workforce development.

1. Community Strengths and Weaknesses: Analyzing this data can identify what sectors of the job market are strong within the community and which are not. If many people are commuting in for work, it might suggest that there are industries or employers in the community that are attractive and potentially expanding. Conversely, if many residents are commuting out of the community for work, it may indicate a lack of sufficient or desirable job opportunities locally.

2. Skills Gap Analysis: This information can help identify the potential skills gaps in the local workforce. If people are leaving the community for work, it might mean that their skills are not being utilized or recognized locally. CTC can use this information to tailor their curriculum to meet these local needs, helping to close the skills gap.

3. Economic Impact: Understanding the inflow and outflow dynamics can provide insights into the economic health of the community. If many people are commuting out for work, it might suggest a drain of wealth from the community, as these individuals are likely to spend their income closer to their workplace. CTC can contribute to local economic development by training a workforce that can meet the needs of local industries, encouraging businesses to establish or expand in the community.

4. Infrastructure and Planning: Inflow and outflow data can provide critical information for infrastructure planning. Large numbers of commuters might suggest a need for improved transportation or housing options. While this may not directly impact CTC's programs, being part of these conversations can ensure that the college's needs are considered in community planning.

5. Collaboration Opportunities: Finally, understanding the dynamics of who is working where can open up opportunities for collaboration. For instance, if there's a significant inflow of workers in a specific industry, the college could partner with those businesses to offer tailored training programs, internships, or job placement services.

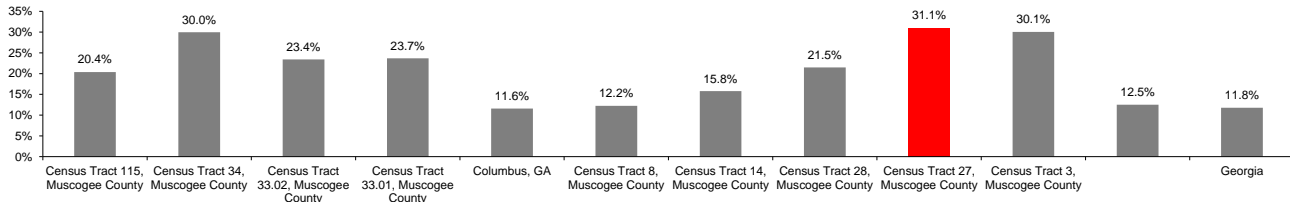
By integrating these insights into its strategic planning, CTC can align its offerings with community needs, support local economic growth, and ensure its graduates are equipped with the skills to find rewarding employment within their community.

Source: <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

Educational Attainment by Census Tract

	Census Tract 115, Muscogee County	Census Tract 34, Muscogee County	Census Tract 33.02, Muscogee County	Census Tract 33.01, Muscogee County	Columbus, GA	Census Tract 8, Muscogee County	Census Tract 14, Muscogee County	Census Tract 28, Muscogee County	Census Tract 27, Muscogee County	Census Tract 3, Muscogee County	Census Tract 3, Muscogee County	Georgia
Total Population 25 years or older, 2021*	2,856	1,004	1,375	705	133,479	1,716	1,279	1,508	1,262	988	988	7,075,856
No high school degree	582	301	322	167	15,462	210	202	324	392	297	297	831,989
No high school degree, percent	20.4%	30.0%	23.4%	23.7%	11.6%	12.2%	15.8%	21.5%	31.1%	30.1%	30.1%	11.8%

Population with Less than High School Education, 2021

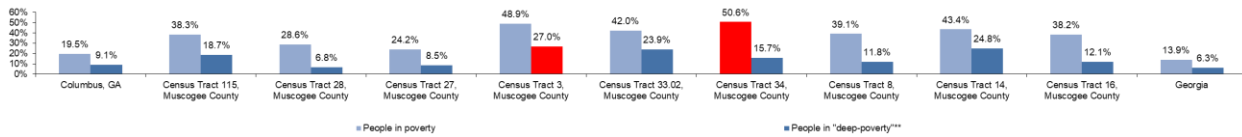


Census Tract 27, Muscogee County has the largest share of people with less than a high school education (31.1%).

People in Poverty, 2021

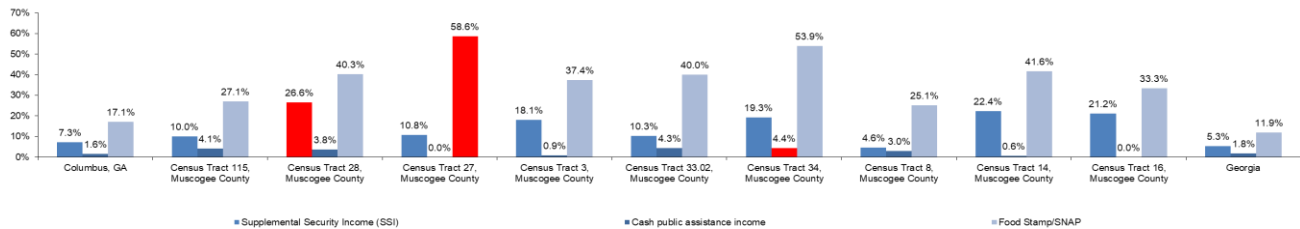
Individuals in Poverty by Census Tract

	Columbus, GA	Census Tract 115, Muscogee County	Census Tract 28, Muscogee County	Census Tract 27, Muscogee County	Census Tract 3, Muscogee County	Census Tract 33.02, Muscogee County	Census Tract 34, Muscogee County	Census Tract 8, Muscogee County	Census Tract 14, Muscogee County	Census Tract 16, Muscogee County	Census Tract 16, Muscogee County	Georgia
Total population for whom poverty status is determined, 2021*	197,913	4,589	2,014	2,780	1,459	1,953	1,830	2,814	1,990	2,491	2,491	10,356,895
People in poverty	38,670	1,757	576	672	714	821	926	1,100	864	951	951	1,441,351
People in "deep-poverty"***	17,927	857	136	236	394	467	287	331	494	302	302	654,975
Both in poverty and over 65	4,213	108	46	54	68	76	78	74	120	358	358	147,307



Census Tract 3, Muscogee County has the largest share of people in "deep poverty" (27%). Census Tract 34 has the largest share of people in poverty (50.6%).

Percent of Households Receiving Earnings, 2021

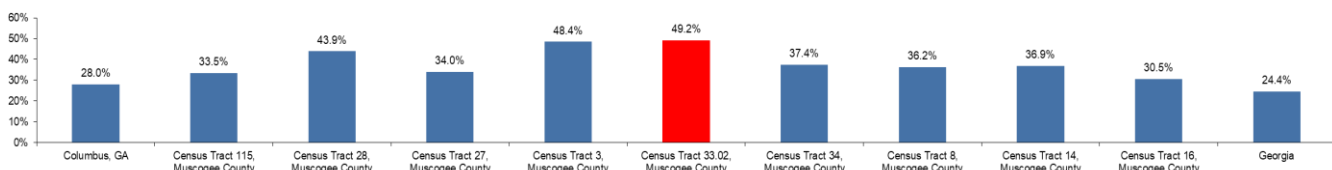


Census Tract 28, Muscogee County has the largest share of households receiving Supplemental Security Income (26.6%).

Census Tract 34, Muscogee County has the largest share of households receiving cash public assistance (4.4%).

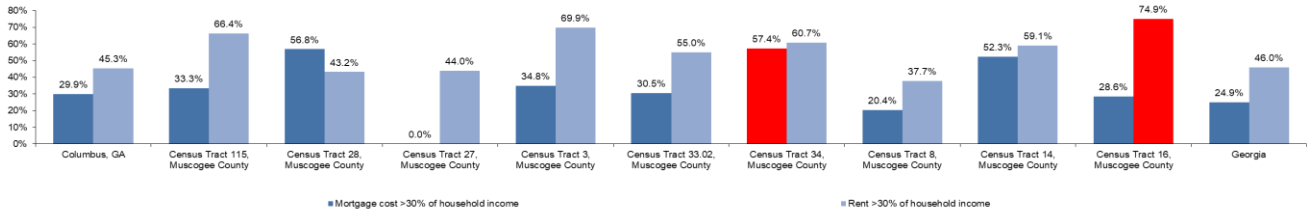
Census Tract 27, Muscogee County has the largest share of households receiving Food Stamps/SNAP (58.6%).

People that Did Not Work, Percent of Population (16-64 Years), 2021



Census Tract 33.02, Muscogee County has the largest share of the population that did not work (49.2%).

Housing Costs as a Percent of Household Income, 2021

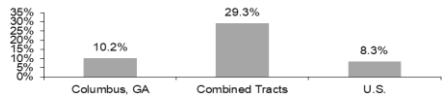


Census Tract 34, Muscogee County has the largest share of unaffordable housing for homeowners, with 57.4% spending over 30% of household income on mortgage costs.

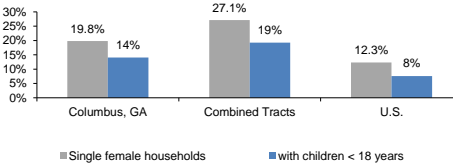
Census Tract 16, Muscogee County has the largest share of unaffordable housing for renters, with 74.9% spending over 30% of household income on rental costs.

Combined Tract Analysis

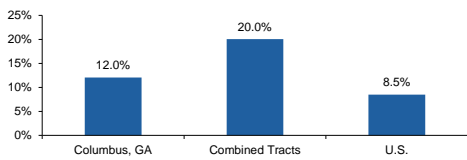
Households with No Car as a Percent of Total Households, 2021



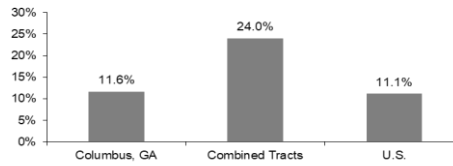
Single Female Households as Percent of Total Household, 2021

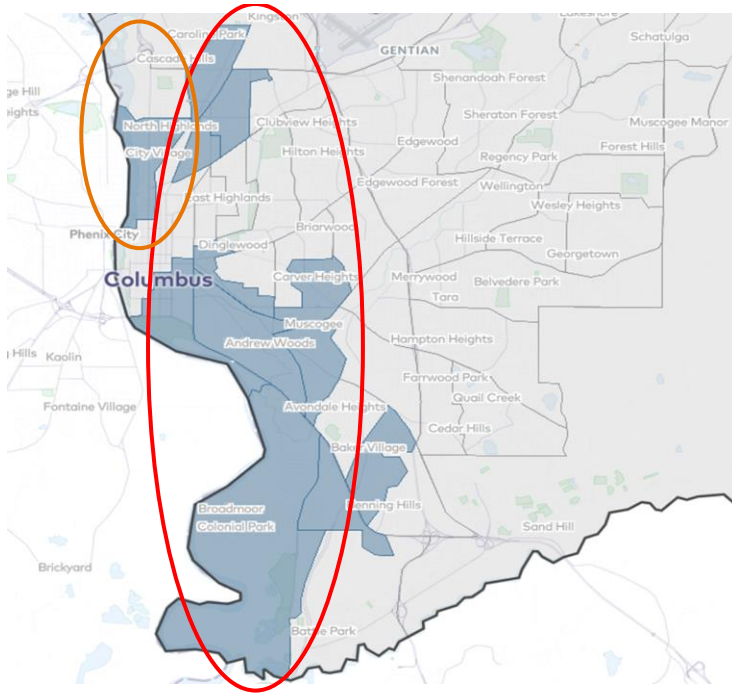


People without Health Insurance Percent, 2021



Population with Less than High School Education, 2021





Neighborhood Breakdown

The final section of the Environmental Scan provides a detailed breakout of specific neighborhoods within Columbus' community, as defined by various census tracts. The census tracts CTC has chosen to analyze in detail are: Tract 115 (Colonial Park Neighborhood), Tract 34 (Benning Hills Neighborhood), Tract 33 (Baker Village Neighborhood), Tract 8 (Club View Heights), Tract 14 (City Village Neighborhood), Tract 28, Tract 27, and Tract 3 (neighborhood adjacent to Crescent Ridge).

Note: An additional track added to the map includes the Mill District (Tract 16) highlighted by the orange circle. **41%** of the people living in the Mill District live in Poverty. **55%** of households do not have a car. **72%** of the population identifies as people of color and Hispanic.

These neighborhoods were selected due to the unique challenges they face. The analysis of these neighborhoods uncovers a range of factors that are integral to understanding the unique circumstances each area faces. This includes an exploration of housing costs, educational attainment, the percentage of families receiving public assistance, and rates of poverty and unemployment. Beyond these factors, these census tracts also demonstrate higher percentages of households without cars (**21%** compared to **10%** in greater Columbus), single female households (**27%**), and single female households with children under 18 (**19%**) — both figures being higher than the respective averages for Columbus, GA as a whole (**20%** and **14%**).

Furthermore, these areas also display a higher percentage of individuals without health insurance (**20%** versus **12%** in greater Columbus).

These statistics are significant for several reasons and can provide important insights to inform the strategic decisions of Columbus Technical College:

Transportation Accessibility: The higher percentage of households without cars indicates a potential transportation barrier for residents in these neighborhoods. Columbus Technical College may want to consider strengthening online classes or work with local transit authorities to improve transportation options to the campus.

Socioeconomic Vulnerability: The elevated percentages of single female households, and particularly those with children under 18, suggest a greater level of socioeconomic vulnerability. The college may want to develop support structures for these students, such as affordable childcare or flexible scheduling.

Poverty and Unemployment Rates: High rates of poverty and unemployment underline the urgency and importance of providing accessible educational and vocational training opportunities in these areas. These programs can provide residents with the skills needed to obtain gainful employment and break the cycle of poverty.

Healthcare Access: The larger proportion of individuals without health insurance might indicate a need for health-related support services on campus. Furthermore, this could signal a potential demand for healthcare training programs which could lead to jobs with health benefits.

Targeted Outreach: Recognizing that these neighborhoods face unique and compounded challenges, targeted outreach programs can be developed to specifically address their needs. This might include recruitment efforts, scholarships, or additional support services aimed at overcoming identified barriers.

The insights provided by these neighborhood breakdowns underscore the importance of a nuanced understanding of CTC's community. By acknowledging and addressing the distinct challenges faced by residents of these neighborhoods, Columbus Technical College can better tailor its offerings and support services to ensure that all potential students have the opportunity to succeed.