

CASE STUDY:

COLUMBUS OFFERS
AMAZING OPPORTUNITIES
IN **AVIATION
& AEROSPACE**

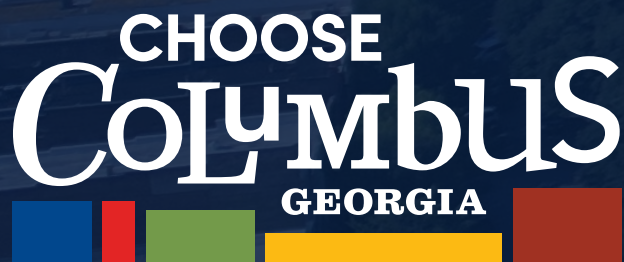


CHOOSE
Columbus
GEORGIA



We do amazing.

The Sky's the Limit for Aviation and Aerospace in Columbus, Georgia



We do amazing.



Columbus, Georgia is the second largest city in the state and part of an extensive aviation and aerospace cluster in the Southeastern U.S. That cluster includes Huntsville, Alabama, and Savannah, Georgia. Columbus' geographical location gives it a tremendous advantage in the industry.

"Georgia is a top five exporter of aerospace products in the U.S., totaling \$9.2 billion in 2022 alone. From the flights that go through the world's most utilized airport to the engines in the airplanes, the Peach State is crucial to moving goods and products," said Georgia Governor Brian Kemp.

With its skilled workforce, strategic central location, mild climate, and supportive business environment, Columbus has become home to two key players in the aerospace sector:

Pratt & Whitney, a subsidiary of Raytheon Technologies (RTX Corporation), known for its jet engines and aerospace systems, and McCauley Propeller Systems the world's oldest and largest full-line propeller manufacturer.

"Georgia's network of aerospace and manufacturing companies support and build on each other in a way that enhances the entire ecosystem," explained Georgia Department of Economic Development GDECD Commissioner Pat Wilson.



COLUMBUS, GEORGIA PROVIDES AVIATION & AEROSPACE COMPANIES WITH A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE



With fierce competition in the aviation and aerospace industry, Columbus offers companies the advantages they need to grow: a fresh and abundant water supply, available sites and buildings, an affordable business climate, a manufacturing workforce, a diverse energy supply, and access to major markets via road, rail, and air.

Abundant Water & Power Supply

Columbus Water Works provides an almost unlimited water supply to manufacturing companies. Water from the river also feeds several nearby hydroelectric dams, which, according to Doug Jenkins, Regional VP of [Georgia Power Company](#), are but one component of an ever-diversifying energy infrastructure. “East of the city, we have many solar facilities,” he explained. “We also have a large coal-fired energy plant, and soon, we’ll be bringing a large nuclear power plant to the Augusta area.” He added that the power distribution system is exceptionally reliable and efficient.

Low Utility Rates

Thanks to the abundance of water and excellent management, [Columbus Water Works](#) offers the best rates in the Southeastern United States. [Georgia Power](#) is the largest subsidiary of [Southern Company](#), one of the nation’s largest generators of electricity. The company is an investor-owned, tax-paying utility, serving 2.3 million customers in 155 of the 159 counties in Georgia. In addition to providing great service, Georgia Power’s rates remain well below the national average. [According to Electricity Local](#), Columbus’s average Industrial electricity rate is 4.35% less than the Georgia average and 14.24% less than the national average rate.

Columbus businesses' and residents' natural gas is provided by Liberty – a regulated water, wastewater, natural gas, and electric utility company providing local utility management, service, and support to small and mid-sized communities across the United States.

Location Advantages

Beyond water and power, Columbus offers amazing location advantages that connect aerospace companies to OEMs and a network of suppliers. Georgia is the superhub of the southeast, and Columbus is the gateway to the southeastern states – just 107 miles from Atlanta, approximately 140 miles from Birmingham and 220 miles from Chattanooga.

For transportation by rail, Norfolk Southern and CSX run through Columbus, making it easier to transport raw materials to local aerospace manufacturing companies.

Columbus Airport (CSG) and Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport make reaching 80% of the U.S. market within a 2-hour flight possible. CSG serves the Columbus, GA, and Fort Moore area and offers direct flights to Atlanta. Because it's a mid-sized airport with fewer passengers, TSA lines are short and move quickly, making flying from Columbus convenient and efficient. CSG accommodates over 100,000 passengers annually through Delta Airlines, as well as itinerant business aircrafts and occasional military flights.



Available Sites

Columbus also has plenty of available land, including shovel-ready sites and available buildings in its industrial parks.

One of the most ideal sites for Aviation and Aerospace manufacturing and administration is Muscogee Technology Park, which offers access to U.S. Highway 80 & I-185—sites for sale or lease range from 7 to 138 acres. There are also existing buildings with loading docs, warehouses, storage, office space, and truck courts. All utilities are in place, and great incentives are available.



EVER-ASCENDING AVIATION AND AEROSPACE WORKFORCE

Embry-Riddle: The World's Top University for Aeronautical Education

The Embry-Riddle Fort Moore Site has partnerships with Columbus State University, Pratt & Whitney, and The Technical College System of Georgia, including local partnerships with Columbus Technical College and South Georgia Technical College. It offers aviation-focused associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees and undergraduate certifications. In addition to online, classroom, and virtual classroom instruction, the university provides research opportunities aligned with NASA's mission directives. Embry-Riddle's partnership between CSU's Associate in Engineering Sciences and CTC's upcoming associate degree in Engineering Technology will transfer credits to a bachelor's degree at Embry-Riddle, making it pos-

sible for students in Columbus to receive an engineering-focused degree right in their back yard.

In addition to benefiting from the proximity of Embry-Riddle, Columbus's proximity to Fort Moore gives it a decided workforce advantage. Fort Moore supports more than 120,000 active-duty military, family members, reserve component soldiers, retirees, and civilian employees on a daily basis; the installation is home to 12,900 Permanent active-duty military members and their families.

Approximately 2,500 active duty soldiers exit the military from Fort Moore each year, and approximately 700 of them stay in Columbus. Their presence contributes to the local workforce.



250,000+ WORKERS

IN BI-CITY LABOR SHED

6,300+ BUSINESSES

IN GREATER COLUMBUS

APPROXIMATELY 2,500

ACTIVE DUTY SOLDIERS EXIT THE MILITARY
FROM FORT MOORE EACH YEAR

APPROXIMATELY 700

STAY IN COLUMBUS

OVER 43% INCREASE

IN # OF RESIDENTS WITH BACHELOR'S
DEGREE OR HIGHER SINCE 2000

“Soldiers are vetted, they have security clearances, they’re trustworthy and reliable,” said retired Brigadier General Andrew Hilmes. “Soldiers are vetted, they have security clearances, they’re trustworthy and reliable, and they are inculcated in military values from day one. Employers who hire them are getting trained, mature soldiers with some interesting experiences under their belts.”

Fort Moore offers [The Career Skills Program](#), which allows transitioning service members to participate in Employment Skills Training (EST), on-the-job training (OJT), Pre-Apprenticeships, and Internships. According to Holmes, most soldiers who leave the military through Fort Moore take advantage of that program.

COLUMBUS HAS A HISTORY OF AEROSPACE SUCCESS

Pratt & Whitney: Flying High Since 1925

Pratt & Whitney has had a presence in Columbus for nearly 40 years, where they have grown from a small factory to a large, state-of-the-art manufacturing and overhaul center with approximately 1,850 employees. Today, it's a subsidiary of RTX, the world's largest aerospace and defense company. The Columbus location is home to the Columbus Engine Center and Columbus Forge. The Columbus facility often secures contracts from the U.S. Department of Defense to supply military aircraft engines and components. Those contracts significantly contribute to the region's stability and the growth of the aerospace industry.

In June of 2023, Georgia Governor Brian P. Kemp announced that Pratt & Whitney would expand its operations in Columbus. This \$206 million

investment plan is expected to create around 400 new jobs by the end of 2028. It will go toward purchasing new machinery equipment and an 81,000-square-foot expansion of the Columbus Engine Center.

"Columbus, Georgia, strives to be a top-tier location for businesses to locate and expand," said Heath Schondelmayer, Chair of the Board for the Development Authority of Columbus. "State partnerships and a focus on workforce development make this possible. The success of one of Columbus, Georgia's largest employers, is a major win in our efforts to grow quality jobs and attract new private investment." Pratt & Whitney is partnering with Georgia QuickStart to recruit and train new employees.



Pratt & Whitney
A United Technologies Company



McCAULEY™

McCauley Propeller Systems: Soaring Since 1938

McCauley Propeller Systems was an aviation pioneer that began with 18 employees making wooden propellers in a small workshop. The company changed the aircraft industry by inventing the ground-adjustable, solid-steel propeller in 1941. Twenty years ago, after they opened in Columbus, things took off. They now have over 500 models of propellers available. “McCauley’s been here for years; we’re part of Columbus and will stay here,” said Greg Payne, Plant Manager of McCauley. “The opportunity to grow is huge here, and the quality of life is excellent.”

In addition to providing opportunities to learn and grow, McCauley is a great workplace. “I think one thing that’s tremendous in McCauley is the low turnover rate,” said Payne. “Our average tenure here is 15 years. We have people celebrating 35 years with the company. And so I think that said a lot about who we are.”

McCauley’s Columbus operation is expanding its facilities, and its ambitious 5-year plan includes adding a second shift.

Columbus residents who don’t have a military or aviation school background can get on-the-job training at McCauley Propeller Systems. “We have a great education system to help train new employees,” said Payne. “We’re offering internships that students can apply to instead of going to trade school or into the military. Those internships are building the next generation of CNC operators and Aviation Mechanics. We bring a highschooler in and they work with us for six months at a time. One semester, we teach the ins and outs of manufacturing,”

Georgia is a top five exporter of aerospace products in the U.S., totaling \$9.2 billion in 2022 alone:

- Pratt & Whitney currently has 1,850 employees in Columbus and recently announced a \$206 million investment plan expected to create around 400 new jobs by the end of 2028.
- Embry-Riddle is the world’s largest and most respected university specializing in aviation and aerospace. Its Fort Moore Site partners with Columbus State University, Pratt & Whitney, and The Technical College System of Georgia.
- McCauley’s Propeller Systems Columbus operation is expanding its facilities, and its ambitious 5-year plan includes adding a second shift.

BUSINESSES THRIVE IN COLUMBUS

Adjacent to I-185 and approximately 1.5 hours from Atlanta, Columbus is home to major corporations beyond aerospace and aviation, including Aflac, Synovus Financial Corporation, TSYS (Total System Services), Char-Broil, and Piedmont Columbus Regional Healthcare. Other major corporations, such as Kia Motors Manufacturing, Coca-Cola Bottling Company UNITED, and Hostess, have locations here as well. Columbus also has many mid-sized companies, small businesses, and innovative startups spanning various sectors.

“The community really supports us,” said Heath Schondelmayer, Market President of Columbus Synovus and Chair of the Columbus Economic Development Authority.

“Georgia has been the top state to do business in for ten years in a row, and Columbus is pro-business,” he added. “Many businesses have started here and gone public to become Fortune 500 companies.”

In addition to Georgia’s broad range of state tax incentives, Columbus offers a substantial number of local business incentives based on the level of investment and the creation of jobs.

“Columbus has one of the best public/private partnerships I have ever seen,” said Christopher Woodruff, The Cotton Companies Founder and CEO. “Here, you can go to your City Council, ask about what’s happening, and watch them get excited. I live in Columbus because I like to get things done.”

Knowing a diverse business ecosystem is best for the community, Columbus offers programs that substantially help prospective and newly-minted entrepreneurs.

Those programs include entrepreneurial education programs, business incubators, and mentoring. Columbus has several organizations designed to support and encourage startups in innovative ways. One of its most notable organizations is StartUp Columbus, which helps make office space and human, financial, and professional resources available. Thanks to its partnership with Co.StartersCo, future business owners can take an entrepreneurship course and compete in a business pitch competition, which provides \$40K in funding to all its winners.

“We have been going for five years and have supported hundreds of entrepreneurs,” said StartUp Columbus Executive Director Ben McMinn. “So far, 140 entrepreneurs have graduated through our program, and forty-four businesses have incubated out of here.”



Adding to and supporting the local workforce in a wide variety of fields are [Columbus State University](#), [Columbus Technical College](#), [Mercer Medical School](#), [Morehouse Medical School](#), [Georgia Military College](#), [Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University](#), and [Strayer University](#) also have Columbus Campuses. Meanwhile, [Auburn University](#), [Georgia Institute of Technology](#), and [Georgia State University](#) are just a short drive away.

“If you come to Columbus Tech, you’ll be accepted, and we’ll start you on a career path,” said the President of [Columbus Technical College](#), Martha Ann Todd. “We also offer employers a warranty. If an employer hires a graduate and they don’t have the skill they’re supposed to have within two years, we retrain them at no cost to the company or the student.” She explained that in addition to employer warranties, her school is always open to developing new programs in response to employer needs.

TESTIMONIALS



“We manufacture propellers and assemble propellers for Cessna aircraft and other customers. So we’re on multiple aircraft throughout the world, taking raw forgings and make them into propellers,” said **Greg Payne, Plant Manager at McCauley Propeller Systems.**

“Columbus is a great place to have a business and we have a long history here. We’ve been here for over 20 years and Columbus has really grown in the aviation industry. We’re growing and

there’s multiple companies coming here because the community loves aviation. We even have a great high school internship program that we’ve started and really, we’re dedicated to Columbus because this is the future of aviation,” added Payne.

Marcus Wimberly, Manufacturing Supervisor at McCauley added, “I supervise

over thirty people and my job is to train and develop my people - to create a safe environment for them so that they can have a place where they can produce a quality product in an efficient manner.”

“Working for McCauley is a rewarding career,” he added. “I was in the military and decided to make Columbus my home when I retired. I’ve been here for 20 years and people in the community have always shown so much love and support. It’s a good place to make your home.”

“Our advantage here in Columbus with McCauley is the people of Columbus and the schools - our network with of technical colleges and high schools. We’re really grow in the industry and we’re going into new technology. We need to grow the future of aviation and we can do that right here in Columbus, Georgia,” said Payne.

“I absolutely love Columbus. I love the work ethic of our employees and this community is top notch,” he concluded.





LIFESTYLE: COLUMBUS OFFERS AN AMAZING LIFESTYLE



Rising from the east bank of the Chattahoochee River, this unique city of just over 202,000 people offers a unique mixture of big-city amenities and hometown Southern charm.

Fondly described as “under the radar and over the top,” Columbus is full of surprises. Home to the world’s most extensive urban whitewater rafting course and bordered by a 15-mile scenic river walk, it’s an extraordinary place where nature’s beauty weaves itself into the urban tapestry in unexpected ways. There are blocks of postcard-perfect 19th-century architecture, massive oak trees, public fountains, and eclectic art installations. The pleasantly walkable downtown and adjacent neighborhoods boast delightful stores, restaurants, pubs, and coffee shops – many of which offer pet-friendly outdoor seating and fast, free Wi-Fi. The friendliness is palpable, and so is the professional energy. Two hundred fifty thousand people work in the greater Columbus region, many coming from 20 surrounding counties in both Georgia and Alabama. More than half of them are ages 25-44.

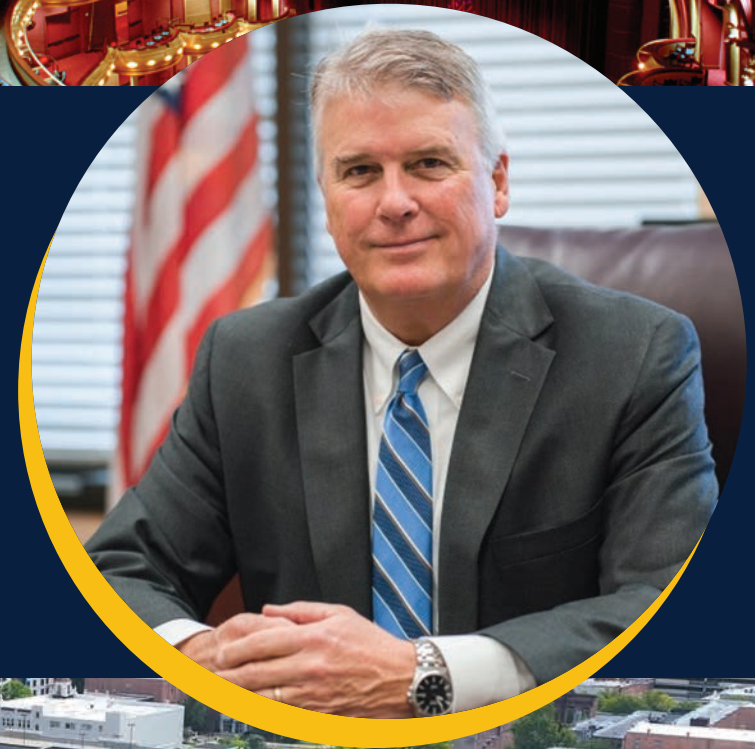
Though the cost of living is about 12% below the national average, Columbus offers cultural, lifestyle, and recreational amenities on par with larger cities.

In addition to the whitewater rapids course, river walk, and idyllic downtown, the city has an extensive urban trail system, nine historic districts, and three farmers’ markets. It’s also home to the [National Civil War Naval Museum](#), [The National Infantry Museum](#) and [American Soldier Center](#), and [The Coca-Cola Space Science Center](#), which features an immersive theater and an observatory. [The Columbus Museum](#) offers American artwork and regional history exhibits. Concert and Theatergoers can see their favorite entertainment in the opulent [RiverCenter for the Performing Arts](#) or the [Columbus Civic Center](#), which also hosts basketball, cheerleading, hockey, figure skating, and Esports events. Another acclaimed sports facility is [Historic Golden Park](#), Official Home to [Columbus Chatt-A-Hoots](#), Sunbelt Baseball League. The city also boasts the nationally renowned [South Commons Complex](#), Home to the 1996 Olympic Women’s Fastpitch Softball Competition and the 2019 USA Softball International Cup. [Bull Creek Golf Course](#), [Cooper Creek Tennis Center](#), and [Columbus Aquatic Center](#) add to the city’s recreational offerings.

“This town has great things to offer in every interest area, arts, music, outdoor adventure, it’s all here, and it’s all easy to get to. You’re never more than 10-15 minutes from anything and everything,” said President and Chief Officer, Pace Halter of WC Bradley Real Estate.



“We’re uniquely positioned,” said Columbus Mayor Skip Henderson. “We get people coming in all the time who have either not been to Columbus in a long time, or who have never been to Columbus, and they usually start the conversation with ‘I had no idea.’”

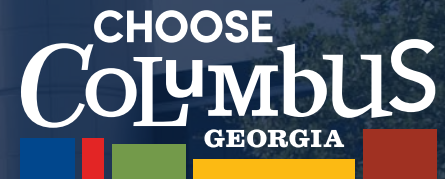


Blue Skies in the Forecast for Aviation and Aerospace

In addition to location advantages, workforce, and quality of life, the aviation and aerospace industries thrive in Columbus because they get fantastic support from the government, the Chamber of Commerce, and the community. “Everything we need is right where we need it. I’m pleased about that,” said Greg Payne of McCauley. “I feel very supported by the Chamber.”

“Economic vitality for our residents and area businesses has been and remains among my top priorities,” said Columbus Mayor Skip Henderson. This priority continues to come to fruition as the city continues to be attractive to growing companies. The optimism in Columbus is palpable as this small metropolitan area has taken off and is ascending to new heights.

The **Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber of Commerce Economic Development** is dedicated to offering support and resources for businesses looking to Choose Columbus. We can put together a relocation package for your company. Contact us today for information and assistance.



We do amazing.

**Greater Columbus Georgia Chamber
of Commerce Economic Development**

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