Columbus Market Fundamentals Continue to Strengthen

▼21.4%	▼93,460	▲14,695	▼63,626	▲$23.15
Vacancy Rate	SF Net Absorption	SF Construction Delivered	SF Under Construction	FSG/YR Direct Lease Rate

Note: Arrows indicate change from previous quarter.

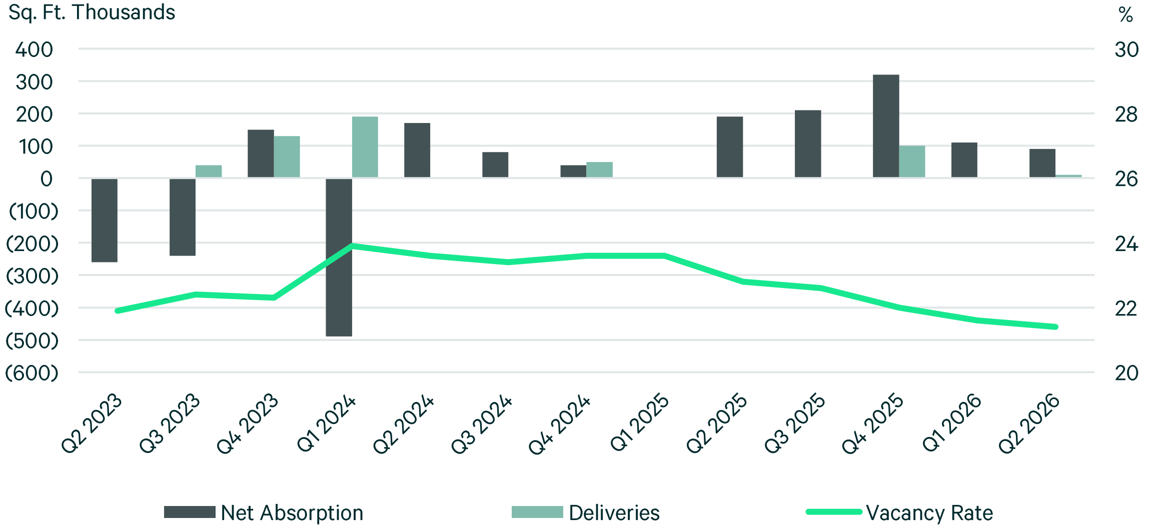
Market Overview

The Columbus office market continued to strengthen in Q2 2026, with 93,000 sq. ft. of positive net absorption marking the sixth consecutive quarter of occupancy gains. Vacancy declined 20 basis points to 21.4%, down 140 basis points year-over-year, while availability tightened to 23.5%. Year-to-date absorption reached 207,000 sq. ft., reflecting sustained tenant demand across the market.

Leasing activity accelerated during the quarter, totaling 435,000 sq. ft.—nearly double the volume recorded in Q1 and up 36% from one year ago. Class A space accounted for nearly 80% of this quarter's activity, while at the submarket level activity was led by Downtown, Easton and Dublin, including notable commitments from South College of Ohio, Total Quality Logistics and Burns & McDonnell.

Market fundamentals continue to improve as supply pressures fade. Asking rents increased to a record $23.15 per sq. ft., up 4.0% year-over-year, while the construction pipeline declined to just 64,000 sq. ft. With limited new supply entering the market and demand remaining positive, Columbus continues to move toward a tighter operating environment.

Figure 1: Historical Net Absorption, Deliveries, and Vacancy



Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Vacancy

In Q2 2026, vacancy remains highly segmented by property class. Class A records the highest overall vacancy at 22.7%, down 30 basis points quarter-over-quarter, 580 basis points year-over-year and 660 basis points versus Q2 2023. Class B vacancy stands at 22.0%, easing 20 basis points quarter-over-quarter but rising 120 basis points year-over-year and 480 basis points over the past three years. Class C posts the lowest vacancy at 15.4%, a 60 basis point decline quarter-over-quarter, 60 basis points higher than a year ago and 810 basis points above its level three years earlier.

At the submarket level, Airport posts the lowest overall vacancy at 2.0%, followed by Bexley/Whitehall and Upper Arlington, each at 3.0%. At the other end of the spectrum, Westerville records the highest vacancy at 37.8%, while New Albany at 29.6% and Dublin at 25.6% also carry elevated vacancy.

Sublease availability in Q2 2026 is largely stable quarter-over-quarter: Class A sublease vacancy holds at 5.4% and Class B falls 30 basis points to 1.2% Across all submarkets, sublease space totals 1.0 million sq. ft., with the largest blocks in Downtown, Dublin, New Albany and Westerville.

Asking Rent

In Q2 2026, the overall market average asking rent was $23.15 per sq. ft. FSG per year, up from $22.81 per sq. ft. in Q1 2026, a quarter-over-quarter increase of 1.5%. Compared with $22.26 per sq. ft. in Q2 2025, this represents a 4.0% year-over-year gain, and rents have risen 6.5% from $21.74 per sq. ft. in Q2 2023, indicating steady appreciation over the period. Class A asking rents reached $28.30 per sq. ft. in Q2 2026, up 2.8% quarter-over-quarter and 12.7% year-over-year, maintaining a $5.15 per sq. ft. premium over the overall market and marking a 21.8% increase since Q2 2023.

Across submarkets in Q2 2026, Grandview and Downtown command the highest Class A asking rents at $34.31 and $30.08 per sq. ft., respectively, with Class B space in these nodes also elevated at $19.13 and $22.80 per sq. ft. Submarkets such as Easton, Dublin, New Albany and Polaris post solid Class A rents between $23.04 and $25.86 per sq. ft., while Airport, Gahanna and Hilliard show more moderate Class B levels ranging from $17.45 to $20.01 per sq. ft. At the more affordable end, Reynoldsburg and Bexley/Whitehall record the lowest observed asking rents for Class C space at $13.95 and $13.77 per sq. ft., underscoring a wide rent spread across the metro.

Figure 2: Vacancy Rates by Class

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Figure 3: Average Direct Asking Rate by Class

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Net Absorption

In Q2 2026, the market recorded total net absorption of 93,000 sq. ft. This level was below the prior quarter's 114,000 sq. ft., a decline of 21,000 sq. ft. quarter-over-quarter, and below the 191,000 sq. ft. recorded in Q2 2025, a year-over-year decrease of 98,000 sq. ft. All property classes reported positive absorption, with Class A leading at 42,000 sq. ft., followed by Class C at 35,000 sq. ft. and Class B at 16,000 sq. ft.

Among submarkets, Worthington posted the highest positive net absorption in Q2 2026 at 60,000 sq. ft., with Downtown close behind at 52,000 sq. ft. The next strongest gains occurred in Dublin, where two segments recorded 26,000 sq. ft. and 24,000 sq. ft. of net absorption. On the downside, Grandview registered the most negative net absorption at negative 54,000 sq. ft., followed by Downtown with negative 45,000 sq. ft.

Figure 4: Net Absorption Trend

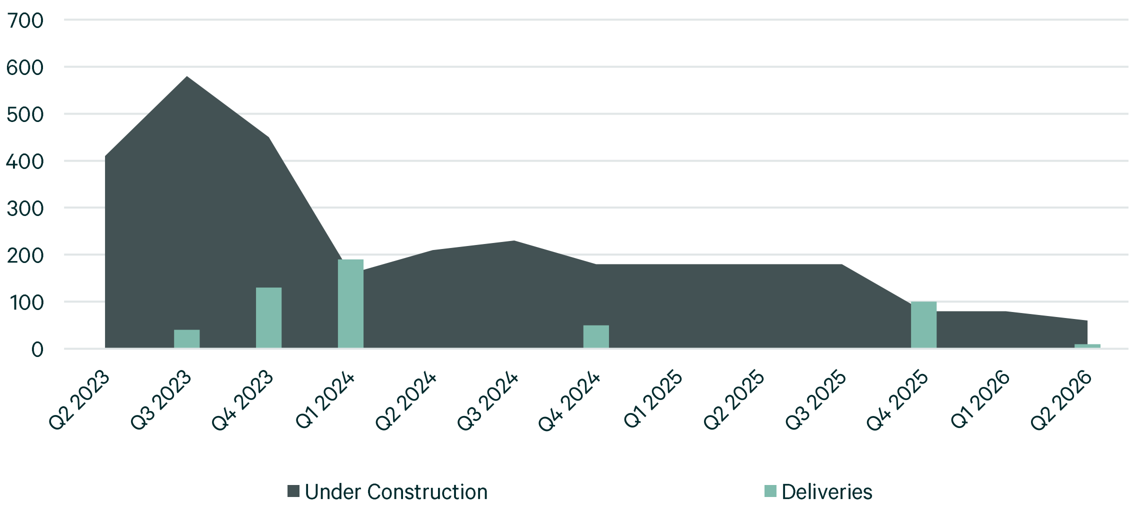
Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Construction Activity

In Q2 2026, the market had 64,000 sq. ft. under construction and 15,000 sq. ft. delivered, down from 78,000 sq. ft. underway and no deliveries in Q1 2026. Under construction is 18.0% lower quarter-over-quarter and 63.8% lower year-over-year versus 177,000 sq. ft. in Q2 2025, while deliveries resumed after no new product completed in either Q1 2026 or Q2 2025, bringing cumulative deliveries over the last three years to 527,000 sq. ft.

Only two projects remain under construction. Downtown currently has 48,626 sq. ft. underway at The Merchant Building, while Bexley/Whitehall has 15,000 sq. ft. under construction at The Fitzgerald.

Figure 5: Construction Activity



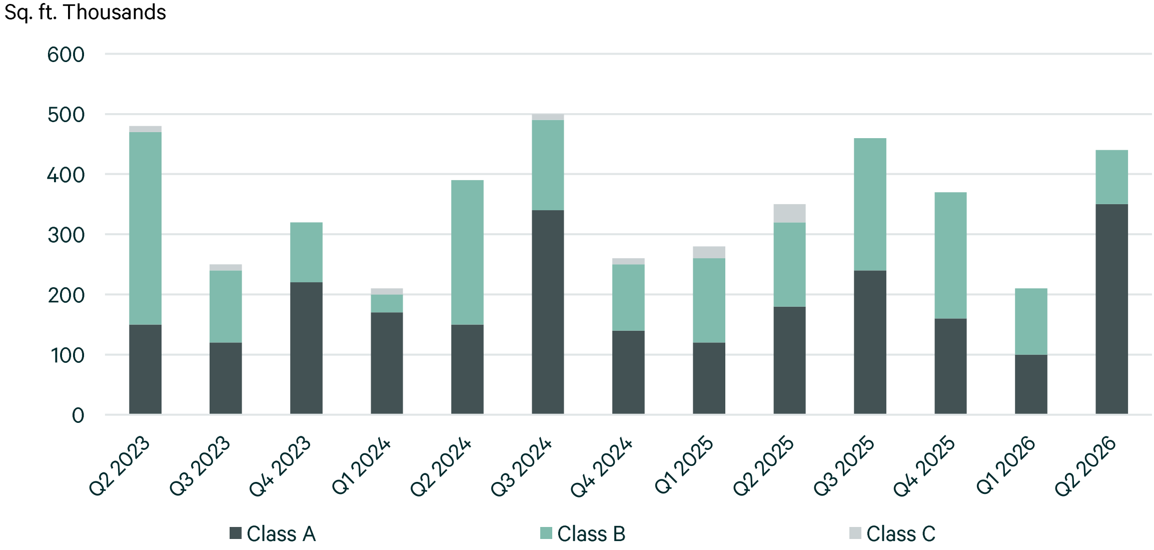
Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Leasing Activity

Total leasing activity in Q2 2026 reached 435,000 sq. ft., compared with 219,000 sq. ft. in Q1 2026 and 320,000 sq. ft. in Q2 2025. This represented a 98.6% increase quarter-over-quarter and a 35.9% gain year-over-year, with Class A space accounting for 347,000 sq. ft. and almost 80% of the total leased area, with Class B space contributing 88,000 sq. ft.

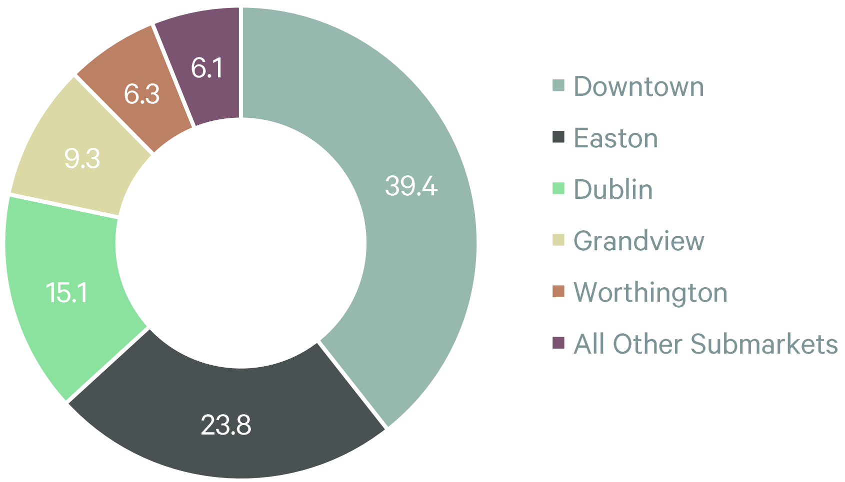
Among submarkets with positive leasing in Q2 2026, Downtown recorded the highest volume at 171,000 sq. ft., followed by Easton with the second-highest at 103,000 sq. ft. Positive leasing also occurred in Dublin at 66,000 sq. ft., Grandview at 41,000 sq. ft., and Polaris and Worthington at 27,000 sq. ft. each.

Figure 6: Leasing Activity Trend



Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Figure 7: Leasing by Submarket (% of Total Activity)



Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Figure 8: Key Lease Transactions

Tenant	Sq. Ft. Leased	Transaction Type	Address	Submarket
M/I Homes	65,000	Renewal	4131 Worth Ave	Easton
South College of Ohio	43,000	New Lease	5525 Parkcenter Cir	Dublin
Issac Wiles	43,000	Renewal	2 Miranova Pl	Downtown
Total Quality Logistics	36,000	New Lease	671 S High St	Downtown
Burns & McDonnel	32,000	New Lease	2 Miranova Pl	Downtown
Schneider Downs and Company	27,000	New Lease	1050 Yard St	Grandview
Paul J. Ford	24,000	Renewal	250 E Broad St	Downtown
The Shipyard	17,000	New Lease	580 N 4th St	Downtown

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Market Statistics by Class

Figure 9: Metro Market Statistics by Class

Property Class	Net Rentable Area (SF)	Total Vacancy (%)	Total Availability (%)	Direct Availability (%)	Sublease Availability (%)	Avg. Direct Asking Rate ($/SF FSG/yr)	Current Quarter Net Absorption (SF)	YTD Net Absorption (SF)	Deliveries (SF)	Under Construction (SF)
Class A	13.46M	22.7	23.1	17.5	5.6	28.30	42,000	255,000	15,000	64,000
Class B	22.46M	22.0	25.3	23.4	1.8	21.21	16,000	(77,000)	-	-
Class C	5.45M	15.4	17.4	16.8	0.6	17.60	35,000	29,000	-	-
Total	**41.38M**	**21.4**	**23.5**	**20.6**	**2.9**	**23.15**	**93,000**	**207,000**	**15,000**	**64,000**

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Figure 10: Suburban Market Statistics by Class

Property Class	Net Rentable Area (SF)	Total Vacancy (%)	Total Availability (%)	Direct Availability (%)	Sublease Availability (%)	Avg. Direct Asking Rate ($/SF FSG/yr)	Current Quarter Net Absorption (SF)	YTD Net Absorption (SF)	Deliveries (SF)	Under Construction (SF)
Class A	7.45M	24.8	23.4	14.7	8.8	26.22	(9,000)	165,000	15,000	15,000
Class B	15.71M	20.0	23.3	21.2	2.1	20.29	60,000	21,000	-	-
Class C	4.43M	14.0	15.7	15.0	0.7	16.97	36,000	37,000	-	-
Total	**27.59M**	**20.3**	**22.1**	**18.4**	**3.7**	**21.52**	**87,000**	**223,000**	**15,000**	**15,000**

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Figure 11: Urban Market Statistics by Class

Property Class	Net Rentable Area (SF)	Total Vacancy (%)	Total Availability (%)	Direct Availability (%)	Sublease Availability (%)	Avg. Direct Asking Rate ($/SF FSG/yr)	Current Quarter Net Absorption (SF)	YTD Net Absorption (SF)	Deliveries (SF)	Under Construction (SF)
Class A	6.01M	20.0	22.7	21.1	1.6	30.08	52,000	90,000	-	49,000
Class B	6.75M	26.6	29.9	28.7	1.2	22.80	(44,000)	(98,000)	-	-
Class C	1.03M	21.3	25.0	24.6	0.4	18.63	(1,000)	(8,000)	-	-
Total	**13.79M**	**23.4**	**26.4**	**25.1**	**1.3**	**25.40**	**7,000**	**(16,000)**	**-**	**49,000**

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Market Statistics by Submarket

Figure 12

Submarket	Net Rentable Area (SF)	Total Vacancy (%)	Total Availability (%)	Direct Availability (%)	Sublease Availability (%)	Avg. Direct Asking Rate ($/SF FSG/yr)	Class A Asking Rent ($/SF FSG/yr)	Current Quarter Net Absorption (SF)	YTD Net Absorption (SF)	Deliveries (SF)	Under Construction (SF)
Airport	832,000	2.0	2.8	2.8	-	17.45	-	7,000	14,000	-	-
Bexley/Whitehall	510,000	3.0	4.5	4.5	-	14.12	14.72	12,000	1,000	-	15,000
Downtown	13.79M	23.4	26.4	25.1	1.3	25.40	30.08	7,000	(16,000)	-	49,000
Dublin	7.62M	25.6	27.5	21.2	6.4	21.46	23.08	50,000	133,000	-	-
Easton	2.68M	13.9	13.4	10.6	2.8	25.72	25.86	(6,000)	1,000	-	-
Gahanna	793,000	25.1	27.2	21.7	5.5	20.01	-	(3,000)	13,000	-	-
Grandview	2.32M	19.4	21.3	19.8	1.5	27.69	34.31	(49,000)	(52,000)	-	-
Hilliard	1.04M	22.6	26.7	26.7	-	18.16	-	16,000	112,000	15,000	-
New Albany	1.51M	29.6	30.3	20.2	10.1	22.96	24.17	(1,000)	1,000	-	-
Polaris	2.75M	11.6	13.6	12.5	1.1	22.38	23.04	1,000	(61,000)	-	-
Reynoldsburg	297,000	12.6	12.6	12.6	-	13.95	-	1,000	(3,000)	-	-
Upper Arlington	1.24M	3.0	4.9	4.9	-	20.67	-	5,000	13,000	-	-
Westerville	2.18M	37.8	40.2	34.2	6.0	16.75	-	(4,000)	1,000	-	-
Worthington	3.83M	18.5	20.8	19.2	1.6	20.00	-	60,000	51,000	-	-
Total	**41.38M**	**21.4**	**23.5**	**20.6**	**2.9**	**23.15**	**28.30**	**93,000**	**207,000**	**15,000**	**64,000**

Source: CBRE Research, Q2 2026

Economic Overview

The U.S. economy enters mid-2026 navigating crosscurrents but growing at a healthy pace, with CBRE projecting GDP growth averaging 2.2%, broadly in line with 2025. The AI investment boom is certainly a key driver of this expansion. Concerns surrounding the sustainability of this growth are valid, but we expect AI-related business investment to continue.

The more pressing concern in recent months has been the U.S./Iran conflict and its impact on world energy prices, which recently pushed U.S. inflation to 4.2%. Should the prospective peace deal announced in June come to fruition, inflation would fall to the upper 3% range by year-end as energy prices slowly decrease. Stickier inflation has pushed Treasury yields well above 4%, complicating real estate markets. On the upside, the prospect for peace and normal trade flows in the Persian Gulf could refresh the optimism the CRE market felt at the beginning of the year.

▼ **3.4%**
Unemployment Rate

▲ **1.2M**
Labor Force

▲ **286.7k**
Office Using Jobs

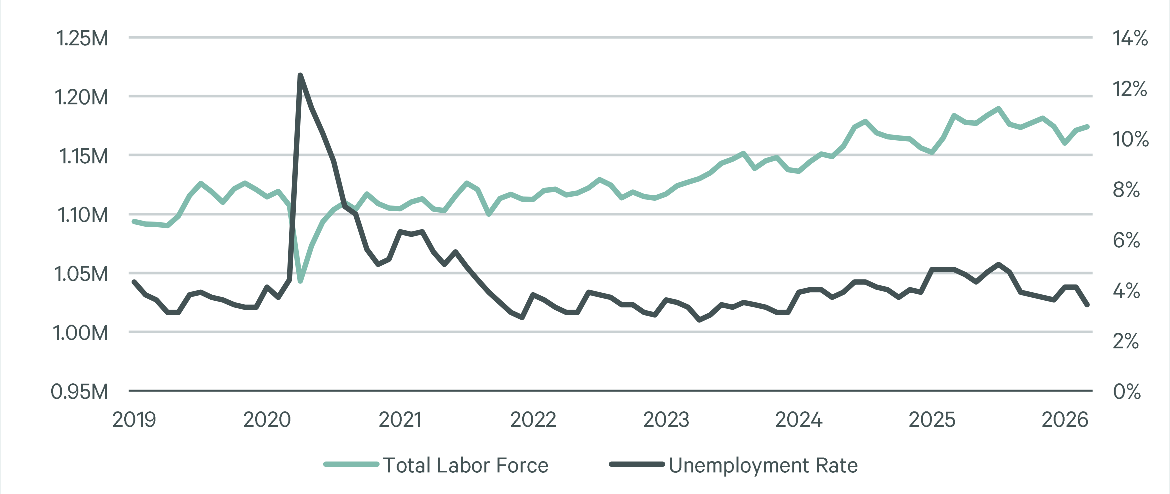
▲ **300.0k**
Industrial Using Jobs

▲ **143.9k**
Retail Using Jobs

Columbus, OH Employment Change by Sector
Bars indicate yearly trend; arrows indicate monthly

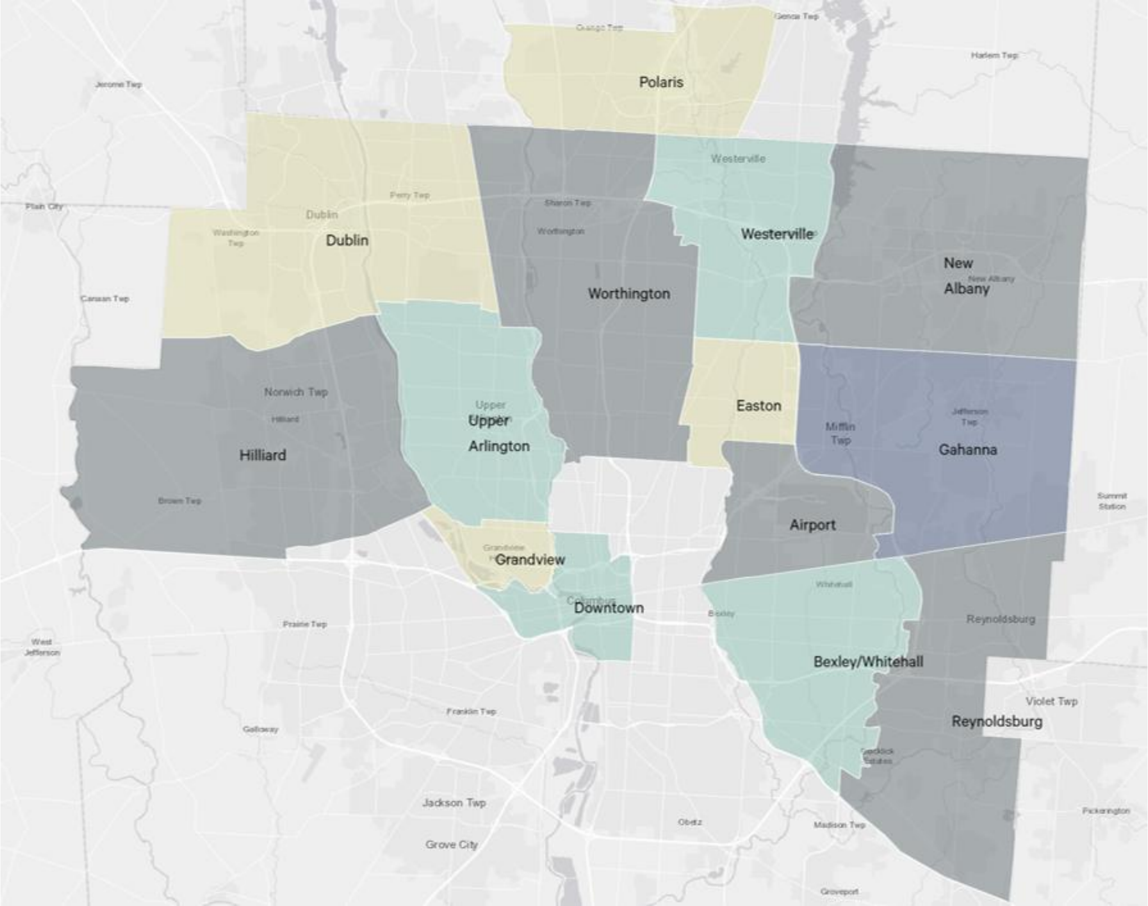
Source: US BLS, April 2026

Columbus, OH Unemployment Rate and Labor Force Trends



Source: US BLS, April 2026. *data not available for October 2025

Market Area Overview



Definitions

Available Sq. Ft.: Space in a building, ready for occupancy within six months; can be occupied or vacant. Availability Rate: Total Available Sq. Ft. divided by the total building Area. Average Asking Lease Rate: A calculated average that includes net and gross lease rate, weighted by their corresponding available square footage. Building Area: The total floor area sq. ft. of the building, typically taken at the “drip line” of the building. Gross Activity: All sale and lease transactions completed within a specified time period. Excludes investment sale transactions. Gross Lease Rate: Rent typically includes real property taxes, building insurance, and major maintenance. Net Absorption: The change in Occupied Sq. Ft. from one period to the next. Net Lease Rate: Rent excludes one or more of the ”net” costs (real property taxes, building insurance, and major maintenance) typically included in a Gross Lease Rate. Occupied Sq. Ft.: Building Area not considered vacant. Vacancy Rate: Total Vacant Sq. Ft. divided by the total Building Area. Vacant Sq. Ft.: Space that can be occupied within 30 days. Class A industrial are buildings built after 2000, with 32’ or greater clear height and ESFR sprinklers.

Survey Criteria

Includes all office buildings 10,000 sq. ft. and greater in size. Buildings which have begun construction as evidenced by site excavation or foundation work. Excludes single-tenant owner-occupied buildings, government-owner-and-operated buildings, and medical buildings.

Contacts

Michael Copella
Managing Executive Director
michael.copella@cbre.com

Lauren Tilmont
Research Manager
lauren.tilmont@cbre.com

Matt Patti
Field Research Analyst
matt.patti@cbre.com

Ashley Pifer
Senior Data Intelligence Analyst
ashley.pifer@cbre.com

Marissa Oberlander
Research Director
marissa.oberlander@cbre.com