

## INTRODUCTION TO URBAN PLANNING

### Spring 2024

### Community Profile Assignment

As noted in the syllabus, each student is required to prepare a Community Profile for one census tract of your choice (**Excluding Census Tracts 4.04 in Albany County and 613.03 in Saratoga County**) preferably in one of the following four counties: Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, or Schenectady. However, if you prefer to do the Profile assignment on a census tract that is not in one of the four counties listed above, please let me know in order to approve the selected census tract in advance before you begin the assignment.

Included with these instructions is information on how to access Census Tract maps from the Census Web site in order to identify and select the Census Tract for the geographic area you are interested in preparing the analysis. Once you select a Census Tract, for a more detailed map that shows the streets and other features within the census tract, I suggest you also review/download a street map of the area included within your Census Tract boundary. As discussed in class and noted on the PowerPoint Slide Supplemental Notes, the separation of the census tract boundaries, are either coterminous with municipal boundaries or along the center line of the streets in urban settings or a permanent natural feature such as a stream.

**There are two parts to the assignment.** The first is a comparative statistical analysis of the census tract in relation to the county it is located and the second is a visual assessment of the land uses and physical characteristics of the neighborhood located **specifically within the Census Tract**.

The instructions to navigate and extract the data from the census website: <https://data.census.gov> are outlined in a separate handout. For the statistical analysis, you are required to collect and analyze the data for **all 14 tables** listed on the retrieval instruction sheet. The primary purpose of this part of the assignment is to prepare a socio-economic profile **comparing each of the Data sets of your chosen Census Tract to the County** it is located by translating the selected data sets into meaningful information and interpreting its significance. **You are required to prepare your own customized tables for each data set and not just copy and paste the tables as listed on the Census Web Site.** The order of the tables listed in the report you are submitting should be in the same order as listed in the **Data Retrieval Instructions**.

The data should be reviewed, analyzed, and communicated to the reader in an easy to understand table format. For each data set, you are required to prepare a customized table that, in cases where there are more than two categories or ranges, includes consolidating/combining categories. For example, the Census “**Sex by Age**” table includes a number of age ranges for males and females. For your report, **the male and female categories shall be combined**, and the number of ranges consolidated into something more manageable (for example: 10 year increments: 0-9, 10-19, 20-29, 30-39. . . . 70+). For the “**Total Population**” and “**Median Value**” tables, which include only one number, you only need to list that number for the selected tract and the county it is located.

For each of the tables, you are required to prepare a written synopsis **directly under the table highlighting the key characteristics (similarities and differences) between the census tract and county for each of the data sets.**

The **Households by Type** table included with these instructions is the table format you shall use to display the Number and Percent Distribution for all the tables except for **Total Population, Median Value, and Poverty Status by Age Group**. The **Poverty Status By Age Group** table, also included with these instructions, is the table format, including the age ranges, you are required to use to display the Poverty data for your census tract and county. The Poverty table also includes the instructions on how to derive the percent of persons living At or Above Poverty and Below Poverty for the Total Population and for the selected Age Groups. To reiterate, do not simply copy and paste the tables as they appear on the Census web site and hand that in as your assignment. And, as noted above, for the “Total Population” and “Median Value” tables, since it is a single number each for the Census Tract and County, you only need to identify the number for the Tract and the County and do not need to include a Percent Distribution column.

The second part of the assignment requires a **visual assessment of the census tract** (not the entire county) you have chosen. The intent is for you to “learn to look” in order to better understand your surroundings and its physical characteristics. You are required to provide a written description based on your insights and impressions about the land uses, housing/building types, and the general physical characteristics and conditions of the area located within the census tract and its immediate borders. The visual assessment should include the perimeter as well as the interior streets of the census tract by either walking or driving around the neighborhood. **Do not use Google Earth as the sole basis for your visual assessment.** The assessment needs to be of sufficient detail that it is specific to the census tract, such as identifying key features and landmarks within the tract. The visual assessment should be at least three to four pages in length and will represent approximately 25% of the grade for the assignment. Photos of specific land use characteristics and buildings that exist within the census tract can also be included.

Though collaboration is permitted, the collaborating students **must** each choose separate Census Tracts to analyze or be severely penalized. I, along with Stephen Hiney, the Graduate Assistant, are available during office hours or at a mutually convenient time to answer questions and provide additional guidance regarding the assignment. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further guidance. An example of an earlier assignment is also available on Brightspace for your review. I also have additional examples for review at my office. As noted on the syllabus, the profile report is due **March 5th**. Late papers will be accepted, however, there is a penalty of two points (out of 100) each day, including Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, the assignment is late.

**The following points outline additional requirements and provide guidance in your analysis:**

- Do not be concerned about and **do not** include in your tables the *Margin of Error* columns listed in the 2022 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimate data sets.
- Create a new table for each data set to display your data. With the exception of the Poverty Rate Table (as noted on the next bullet), when there are two or more ranges/categories that make up a particular data set, in addition to columns indicating the actual number in each category, the table **shall** also include columns showing the percentage distribution for the census tract and county. **See the “Households By Type” sample table included with these instructions for the required layout for all the tables except for Poverty, Total Population and Median Value.**
- For the Poverty data set, **combine male and female and consolidate the age groups in the following manner: 0-17; 18-64; and 65+.** Also, note that the percent distributions



are derived differently. **See the attached “Poverty Status” sample table** for the required table layout and instructions on how to derive the percent distribution for poverty.

- For the Age table, combine male and female together and as noted earlier, consolidate the age groups to reduce the number of categories. Categories or ranges on other tables should also be consolidated/combined, as appropriate, to reduce the size of the number of categories. The consolidation should be undertaken in a thoughtful manner that does not compromise the value of the data set.
- For the Household By Presence of People Under 18 By Household Type table, use the exact categories as listed on the **“Household By Type”** sample table.
- For each table, make sure the sum of the parts equals the Total for that data set. For the Percent, the total should equal 100%.
- For the final Community Profile report that you submit, the order of the Tables shall be in the order presented in the **Data Retrieval Instructions**. As noted earlier, prepare the written analysis for each table directly underneath that particular table.
- **Do not** use graphics (pie charts, bar charts) to present your data sets.
- The entire table and the written description for each table should be on the same page. You should not have parts of the same table displayed on two separate pages or the table on one page with the description highlighting the similarities and differences between the census tract and county on another page. Use page breaks to properly separate the pages keeping the entire table and description on the same page.
- **There are two parts to the assignment:** 1. the statistical abstract for each of the 14 tables and 2. a separate written assessment of your visual observations of the census tract based upon a personal visit to the neighborhood.
- Do not wait until the final week from when the assignment is due to start the assignment. Get started immediately and do not hesitate to ask for assistance if you have any questions in the preparation or interpretation of the tables. Stephen and I are available to meet with you to provide further guidance, including the table structure for each of the data sets, during the preparation of the report. Also, for further guidance, review the example report included in the Brightspace folder. Also, **There will be no opportunity to repeat the assignment if you get a poor grade.**

## HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE

	Census Tract #		Name of County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>126,251</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Married Couple Family HH with Persons Under 18</b>	170	17.5%	19,853	15.7%
<b>Married Couple Family HH with No Persons Under 18</b>	131	13.5%	30,789	24.4%
<b>Male Headed Family HH, No Spouse Present with Persons Under 18</b>	20	2.1%	2,502	2.0%
<b>Male Headed Family HH, No Spouse Present with No Persons Under 18</b>	28	2.9%	2,787	2.2%
<b>Female Headed Family HH, No Spouse Present with Persons Under 18</b>	182	18.7%	8,742	6.9%
<b>Female Headed Family HH, No Spouse Present with No Persons Under 18</b>	56	5.8%	6,691	5.3%
<b>Non-Family Households with Persons Under 18</b>	10	1.0%	300	0.2%
<b>Non-Family Households with No Persons Under 18</b>	373	38.5%	54,587	43.3%

## POVERTY STATUS BY AGE GROUP

	Census Tract #		Name of County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Population for Whom Poverty is Determined	5,637	100.0%	196,387	100.0%
Total Below Poverty Level	442	7.8%	11,238	5.7%
0-17 Years of Age	120	8.0%	3,453	7.0%
18-64 Years of Age	285	7.8%	6,502	5.2%
65+ Years	37	8.1%	1,283	5.8%
Total At or Above Poverty Level	5,195	92.2%	185,149	94.3%
0-17 Years of Age	1,386	92.0%	46,111	93.0%
18-64 Years of Age	3,392	92.2%	118,169	94.8%
65+ Years	417	91.9%	20,869	94.2%

### Deriving Percent Distributions for Poverty

To determine the percent of the Population Below Poverty under the "Census Tract" header, divide 442 (the number below poverty) by 5637 (Population for whom poverty is determined) = 7.8%. For the percent At or Above Poverty, divide 5195 (the number at or above poverty) by 5637 = 92.2%. Notice that the 7.8% below poverty plus the 92.2% at or above poverty equals 100%.

The Percent Below Poverty By Age Group, is derived as follows:

- First determine the total population of the age group. For 0-17 years old in the census tract, it is 120 (Below Poverty) + 1386 (At or Above Poverty) = 1506 total persons 0-17 years old.
- Then divide 120 (Number Below Poverty) by 1506 (Total of Persons 0-17) = 8.0% of Persons 0-17 Below Poverty.
- Then divide 1386 (Number At or Above Poverty) by 1506 (Total of Persons 0-17) = 92.0% of Persons 0-17 At or Above Poverty. Once again notice that the sum of the two = 100%.
- Follow the same procedure for each of the age groups for the Census Tract and County.



## Accessing Census Tract Maps

Go to the [Data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov) web site.

In the Search Box, type in the name of the County and the State where the county is located (ex: ***Albany County, New York Census Tract Map***); Then hit the Search symbol button on the right hand side of the box.

When the new screen appears, along the top of the screen, select “Maps”.

On the new screen will appear the County map that you selected. To the left, under “Filter”, is a list of Geographies. Select “Census Tract” and then in the pop up window select New York (if the Census Tract is located in New York) and then select the County where the census tract is located. Then select “All Census Tracts within the County”.

Then close the tab and a map will then appear displaying the Census Tract boundaries for that County. Enlarge the map to focus in on the area of interest to identify the specific census tract you want to choose for which the data will be collected.

## Retrieving 2022 American Community Survey 5 Year Demographic Data

1. Go to data.census.gov web site.
2. In the search box near the top of the page, type in the **Table Number** for the first table listed below (**B01003**). Use the **exact** table number. **Do not type in the Table Name**. Once the table number is entered, hit the Search symbol button located to the right of the box.
3. Then select “Filters” which is located on the left hand side of the screen. Then scroll down to “Surveys” and select “American Community Survey”. Then in the pop-up window, select “5 year estimates”, then select “Detailed Tables”. That selection will then appear under ”Filters”.
4. Then under “Filters” under “Geography”, select Census Tract. On the next screen, select New York (if that is the State that the Census Tract you selected is located in), and then select the county where your census tract is located and then select the Census Tract (Note that the numbering order is not immediately intuitive. For instance, for the Albany County Census Tracts, Census Tract 1 follows Census Tract 19.02 followed by Census Tract 2). Once the Census Tract is selected, it will appear on the left hand side in the filter. Then under “Geography”, select “County” then select the State the County is located and then select the County. Once the County is selected, it also will appear under Filters below the selected Census Tract. Then close out the Geography window by hitting the “X” in the upper right hand corner.
5. Then under Tables, select the Table with the Table Number you are searching for and the results will then be shown for both the County and Census Tract for the selected table.
6. Next to the Table Title header (B01003 Total Population), hit the arrow button and **make sure it states “2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables”**. If not, then hit the drop down menu and select the “2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables”.
7. On each table, there will be separate columns showing the Estimate and Margin of Error for both the County and Census Tract.
8. To download the table, select “More Tools” and then select “Excel” in the drop down menu. Once downloaded, save the table on your computer. There are two tabs: “Information” and “Data”. Select “Data” and this is the data that you will use to incorporate into your customized tables for each category as outlined in the instructions.
9. Then go back to Census Table and in the Search Window at the top of the page, enter the next table number and hit the Search symbol button. Once again, as noted in Step 6 make sure it states **“2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables”** And, if not, hit the drop down menu and select the 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables. Then download into Excel as noted in Step 8.
10. Repeat entering the table number for each of the following 2022: ACS 5-year data sets that are part of the report:

- **B01003    Total Population**
- **B02001    Race**
- **B03003    Hispanic or Latino Origin**
- **B01001    Sex by Age**
- **B11005    Household By Presence of People Under 18 By Household Type**
- **B25002    Occupancy Status**
- **B25003    Tenure**
- **B15003    Educational Attainment for the  
Population 25 Years and Over**
- **B19001    Household Income in the Past 12  
Months (In 2022 Inflation Adjusted  
Dollars)**
- **B17001    Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months  
By Sex By Age**
- **B08301    Means of Transportation to  
Work**
- **B25063    Gross Rent**
- **B25070    Gross Rent as a Percentage of  
Household Income in the past  
12 Months**
- **B25077    Median Value (\$)**


11. Once all 14 tables are downloaded and saved onto your computer, you need to edit and redesign each table as necessary to meet the requirements of the assignment as outlined in the instructions. For the final Community Profile report that you will be submitting, the order of the **14 Tables** should be in the order presented above. **As noted on the assignment sheet, and illustrated on the example tables provided, do not include the Margin of Error columns and consolidate the categories as appropriate. Prepare a written analysis highlighting the similarities and differences of your selected census tract to the county for each table directly underneath that particular table.**



12. An example of the Community Profile assignment is available for review on Brightspace which I encourage you to check out as a reference. However, in some cases, the ranges that you choose for your census tract may differ from what is shown on the example. For instance, in the example, Household Income is subdivided into \$25,000 ranges. For your census tract, it may be preferred to use \$10,000 increments for the first \$50,000 if there is a higher concentration of lower income households in your census tract. Remember, the objective is to create a customized table that portrays the data about, in this case, household income for your census tract and county so some judgment is required on how to convey the message in a streamlined fashion without compromising the significance of the data set. I, along with Stephen Hiney, the Graduate Assistant, are available for consultation to provide guidance on how you may want to consolidate and customize each of the categories to display the data sets in your report. **For the *Poverty Status By Age Group* and *Households By Type* tables included with the instructions, those are the specific categories to use to display the data regardless of the census tract you choose.**

## Part I: Comparative Statistical Analysis

### B01003: Total Population

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Rensselaer County, New York
Population:	 1055	159,185

### B02001: Race

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total Population	1,055	100%	159,185	100%
White Alone	990	93.8%	137,002	86.1%
Black or African American Alone	0	0%	10,268	6.4%
Other race alone	0	0%	1,916	1.2%
Asian Alone	44	4.2%	4,282	2.7%
Two or more races	21	2%	5,717	3.6%

- There is little racial diversity in census tract 523.03.
- In the census tract, 93.8% of the population is white versus 86.1% in the county.
- There are no African Americans located in this census tract versus 6.4% in the county, however, in the census tract 4.2% are Asians versus 2.7% in the county.

### B03003: Hispanic or Latino Origin

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total Population	1,055	100%	159,185	100%
Hispanic or Latino	0	0%	7,842	4.9%

- There are no persons of Hispanic origin in the census tract whereas in the county 4.9% are Hispanic.

### B01001: Sex by Age

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total	1,055	100%	159,185	100%
>10	101	9.6%	16,824	10.6%
10-19	124	11.8%	19,828	12.5%
20-29	90	8.5%	22,343	14%
30-39	130	12.3%	21,011	13.2%
40-49	160	15.2%	18,807	11.8%
50-59	174	16.5%	22,647	14.2%
60-69	130	12.3%	20,593	13%
70-79	92	8.7%	10,568	6.6%
≥ 80	54	5.1%	6,593	4.1%

- In the census tract 31.7% of the population is between 40 and 59 years old whereas in the county it is 26.0%
- In the census tract, only 8.5% of the population is between 20-29 versus 14% in the county.



# B11005: Household By Presence of People Under 18 By Household Type

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	432	100%	64,906	100%
Married Couple with Persons Under 18	93	21.4%	10,238	15.8%
Married Couple With No Persons Under 18	151	35.0%	17,502	27%
Family HH: Male Only with Persons Under 18	34	7.9%	1,865	2.9%
Family HH: Male Only with No Persons Under 18	15	3.5%	1,320	2.%
Family HH: Female Only with Persons under 18	5	1.2%	4,968	7.7%
Family HH: Female Only with No Persons Under 18	13	3%	3,326	5.1%
Non-Family Households with Persons Under 18	0	0%	157	0.2%
Non-Family Households with No Persons Under 18	121	28%	25,530	39.3%

- In the census tract 56.4% are married couple households versus 42.8% in the county.
- In the census tract, only 1.2% of the households are female only with children versus 7.7% in the county, in fact in the census tract there is a higher percent of male households with persons under 18 (7.9%).
- In the county 39.3% are non-family households versus 28% in the census tract.

## B25002: Occupancy Status

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	499	100%	73,011	100%
Occupied:	432	86.6%	64,906	88.9%
Vacant:	67	13.4%	8,105	11.1%

- There's a slightly higher percentage of vacant housing compared to the county proper.

## B25003: Tenure

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	432	100%	64,906	100%
Owner occupied:	352	81.5%	40,771	62.8%
Renter occupied:	80	18.5%	24,135	37.2%

- There is a much higher concentration of homeowners living in properties they own in 523.03 than in the county.

B15003: Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	814	100%	111,735	100%
Non-Highschool Graduate	37	4.5%	9,072	8.1%
Highschool Graduate	268	32.9%	32,369	29.0%
Some College	126	15.5%	19,278	17.3%
Associate's degree	86	10.6%	15,241	13.6%
Bachelor's degree	199	24.4%	20,121	18.0%
Master's degree	74	9.1%	11,958	10.7%
Prof. school or Doctorate degree	24	3%	3,697	3.3%

- Overall residents of the census tract have a slightly higher level of educational attainment than in the county. In the census tract 36.5% have at least a Bachelor's degree versus 32.0% in the county.



B19001: Household Income in the Past 12 Months (In 2019 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	432	100%	64,906	100%
Less than \$24,999	46	10.7%	10,583	16.3%
\$25,000-\$49,999	107	25%	13,350	20.6%
\$50,000-\$74,999	41	9.7%	11,364	17.5%
\$75,000-\$99,999	68	15.7%	9,180	14.2%
\$100,000-\$124,999	69	15.8%	6,976	10.6%
\$125,000-\$149,999	44	10.3%	4,666	7.2%
\$150,000-\$199,999	33	7.7%	5,044	7.8%
\$200,000 or more	22	5.1%	3,743	5.8%

- Overall household income in the census tract is higher than the county. In the census tract 38.9% of the households have an income over \$100,000 versus 31.4% in the county.

# B17001: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months By Sex By Age

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Population for whom poverty is determined:	1,055	100%	153,415	100%
Total Below Poverty Level	106	10.0%	17,963	11.7%
0-17 Years of Age	56	26.1%	5,505	18.0%
18-64 Years of Age	34	5.5%	10,988	11.2%
65+ Years	16	7.3%	1,470	5.8%
Total At or Above Poverty Level	949	90.0%	135,452	88.30%
0-17 Years	159	73.9%	24,969	82.0%
18-64 Years	586	94.5%	86,672	88.8%
65+	204	92.7%	23,811	94.2%

- In the census tract, there is a much higher percentage of 0-17 year olds below the poverty level (26.1%) than in the county (18.0%).
- In the county the lowest poverty rate is among seniors, while in the census tract it is children by a large margin.
- The poverty rate in the county for persons between 18 and 64 is double the rate of the census tract.

### B08301: Means of Transportation to Work

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	576	100%	78,398	100%
Drove alone	528	91.6%	63,310	80.7%
Carpooled	31	5.4%	6,878	8.8%
Public transportation	0	0%	1,757	2.2%
Other Means	0	0%	667	0.9%
Walked	0	0%	3,261	4.2%
Worked at home	17	3%	2,525	3.2%

- Over 90% of the workers in the census tract commute to work alone, this is likely due to the suburban/rural location of the tract.
- In the county 80.7% of the workers commute to work alone.
- In the census tract no one uses public transportation to get to work while in the county 2.2% use public transportation.



## B25063: Gross Rent

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	80	100%	24,135	100%
\$1-\$649	0	0%	3,632	15%
\$650-\$699	10	12.5%	814	3.4%
\$700-\$799	0	0%	2,342	9.7%
\$800-\$899	8	10%	2,784	11.5%
\$900-\$999	0	0%	2,779	11.5%
\$1,000-\$1,249	41	51.2%	5,561	23.1%
\$1,250-\$1,499	0	0%	2,214	9.2%
\$1,500-\$1,999	16	20%	2,461	10.2%
\$2,000+	0	0%	610	2.5%
No cash rent	5	6.3%	938	3.9%

- The rent rates in 523.03 are much more centralized than in the county proper, having more than 50% of renters in the \$1,000-\$1,249 price bracket.

B25070: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the past 12 Months

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	80	100%	24,135	100%
Less than 10.0%	0	0%	979	4.1%
10-19.9%	23	28.8%	5,648	23.4%
20-29.9%	16	20%	6,150	25.5%
30-39.9%	29	36.1%	3,486	14.4%
40-49.9%	0	0%	1,760	7.3%
50% or more	7	8.8%	4,811	19.9%
Not computed	5	6.3%	1,301	5.4%

- 523.03 has less than half of the number of households paying 50% or more of their income for rent than Rensselaer.
- Overall in the census tract 44.9% spend more than 30% of their income for rent versus 41.6% in the county.

B25077: Median Value (\$)

	Census Tract 523.03, Rensselaer County, New York	Percent	Rensselaer County, New York	Percent
Total:	\$182,500	100%	\$188,700	100%

- The Median Value in 523.03 is slightly lower than that of the County as a whole.