

Is Charleston's Housing Market Truly Unique?

A deeper look at the data reveals a surprising divergence.

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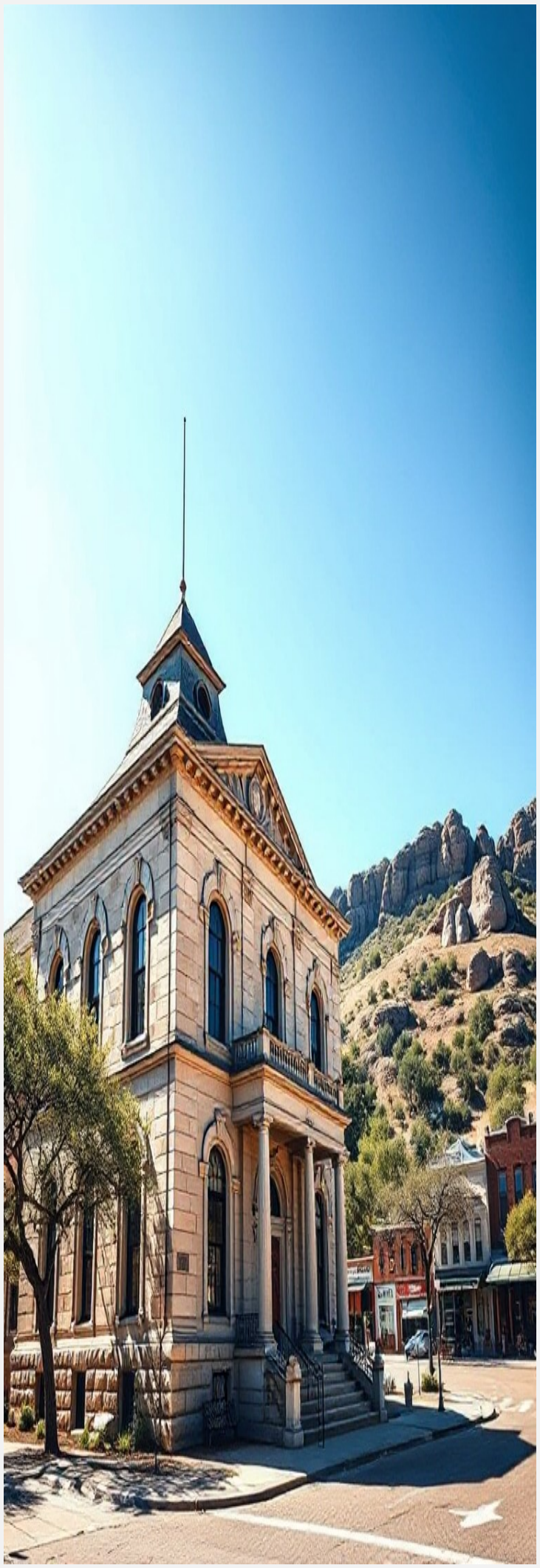
THE DATA

7.3%

Year-over-Year Price Growth

Charleston tri-county saw an increase of 7.3% in median home prices from July 2025 to July 2026.

While South Carolina’s average price growth was just 4.1% during the same period, Charleston’s rise is nearly double the state’s rate. This sharp divergence suggests a localized dynamic at play—possibly driven by supply constraints and investor activity unique to the tri-county region. The Richmond Fed's latest regional housing analysis supports this trend, noting increased demand from out-of-state buyers and a persistent shortage of inventory.



Source: Richmond Fed · Published August 25, 2026

01

Supply Constraints Are Driving Price Gaps

The Charleston tri-county's limited inventory—particularly in the $400K-$600K price range—is creating a ripple effect across the market. Despite modest supply increases, new listings remain well below historical averages. The median days on market has decreased to 28, but this is due to aggressive bidding wars rather than an abundance of homes. This pattern signals a high-demand, low-supply environment that is not reflected in broader South Carolina data.



02

Investor Activity Is Amplifying Market Distortion

A recent analysis from the USC Darla Moore School Division of Research shows that investor activity in Charleston has increased by 18% year-over-year. These investors are primarily targeting rental properties and short-term vacation rentals, which further reduces the number of homes available for owner-occupancy. The result is a market where median home prices rise faster than income growth, potentially pushing out long-time residents.

Real Estate Strategy & Intelligence Leader. Democratized Blue Ocean Strategist & Operator.

Diane Hart Alexander, MBA, MHA

Designated Broker, ALEX.RealEstate
Chair & CEO, ALEX

+1 713.591.9902 · diane@alex.realestate

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