

19-Minute Commute Spread in Houston MSA — ALEX Intelligence 2026

Houston's 19-Minute Commute Spread

Four Corners to West University Place — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

19

Spread in Mean Commute Across the Market, in Minutes (2024)

The gap between the longest and shortest average commute times across Houston MSA cities is 19 minutes.

This 19-minute spread isn't just a number—it's a proxy for spatial inequality. The disparity reflects decades of fragmented infrastructure investment and zoning patterns that prioritize car-dependent sprawl over connectivity.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 • ALEX Intelligence computation

<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-13-houston-msa-commute-spread>



01

Commuting is a hidden wealth filter

The 19-minute spread isn't about time—it's about access. Residents in high-commute zones like Four Corners face higher effective costs: more fuel, longer travel fatigue, and reduced time for family or leisure. These burdens disproportionately impact lower-income households, effectively pricing them out of the most desirable areas, even if they can afford the home price. This is not a transportation issue—it's a structural barrier to upward mobility.



02

The real estate premium is in proximity

In Houston, where car ownership is near-universal, the most valuable real estate isn't in the newest developments—it's in places that minimize travel time. West University Place's low mean commute isn't a coincidence; it's the result of long-standing urban planning that prioritized density and transit access. Future homebuyers should treat commute time not as a personal choice, but as a hard market signal: the lower the average commute, the higher the long-term appreciation potential.

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