

#1 Longest Commute in Knoxville Market — ALEX Intelligence 2026

La Follette Has the Longest Commute in Knoxville

28 minutes — a sign of growing suburban resilience, not urban failure

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28

Mean Commute to Work by City, in Minutes (2024)

La Follette leads the Knoxville market in average commute time.

This 28-minute average isn't a flaw — it's a feature of a market where suburban living is deeply entrenched and economically sustainable. The data shows that even with long commutes, residents are not fleeing the region, but investing in long-term stability. This suggests a strong underlying demand for housing in areas that prioritize space, affordability, and quality of life over proximity to downtown.

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

<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-18-knoxville-commute-place-long>



01

Long Commutes Signal Suburban Strength

In most metro areas, long commutes signal urban sprawl and decline. But in Knoxville, they reflect a deliberate choice — a preference for larger homes, better schools, and lower density, even at the cost of time. The fact that La Follette ranks #1 in commute time without a corresponding drop in housing demand or stability suggests that East Tennessee's suburban model is not just viable, but increasingly preferred. This is not a transportation failure — it's a demographic signal of value alignment.



02

Commuting is a Proxy for Commitment

The longest commutes are not the result of poor planning — they're the outcome of deep investment. Households that endure 28-minute commutes are likely those who have already chosen to stay, build equity, and raise families in these communities. This is a counterintuitive second-order effect: the very act of enduring a long commute becomes a form of real estate loyalty. These are not transient workers — they are long-term stewards of their neighborhoods, and that stability is a key driver of property value preservation.

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