

1.37x Rent Divide Across Memphis Counties — ALEX Intelligence 2026

1.37x Rent Divide in Memphis Counties

Shelby vs. Fayette — a hidden market fracture

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THE DATA

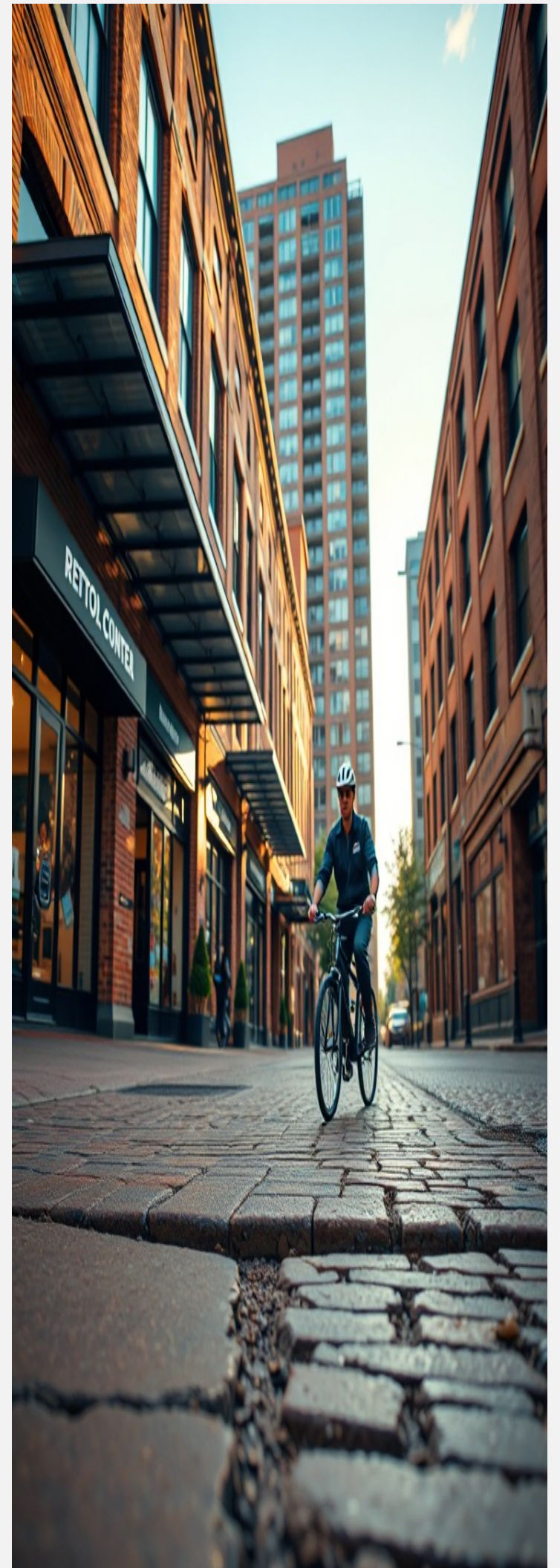
1.37x

Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Median Rent in the Market (2024)

This gap measures the disparity between Shelby County's \$1,232 median rent and Fayette County's \$902, reflecting deep within-county divergence.

This 1.37x spread is not a regional average — it is a sharp internal cleavage. It reveals that within the Memphis metropolitan area, rent levels vary not just by neighborhood, but by entire county jurisdictions. The economic divide is not between city and suburbs, but between the most developed and least developed parts of the region.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 • ALEX Intelligence computation
<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-18-memphis-within-county-gross-rent>



01

Rent Stratification Drives Migration

This trend is amplified by employment concentration in Shelby County's urban core. Workers in logistics, healthcare, and service sectors must choose between longer commutes from Fayette or financial strain in Shelby — a structural trade-off that shapes workforce mobility and long-term neighborhood stability.

02

Industrial Growth vs. Housing Affordability

As industrial real estate expands into lower-rent counties like Madison and Fayette, it creates jobs without inflating housing demand in high-rent areas. This allows the region to grow without immediate pressure on Shelby County's housing stock — but risks creating a two-tiered labor market where jobs are accessible only to those who can afford long commutes.



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