

#1 in Home Value-to-Income Ratio — Huntsville Market Report 2026

Athens Leads Alabama in Home Affordability Crisis

3.9x home value-to-income ratio — ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

3.9x

Home Value to Income Ratio (2024)

Athens has the highest ratio in the Huntsville metro, meaning a home costs nearly four years of median household income.

This ratio reflects a growing disconnect between housing costs and local wages. While the broader Huntsville economy remains strong, certain communities are experiencing a disproportionate strain on affordability. The data reveals that even within a thriving region, some towns are becoming unattainable for average earners.

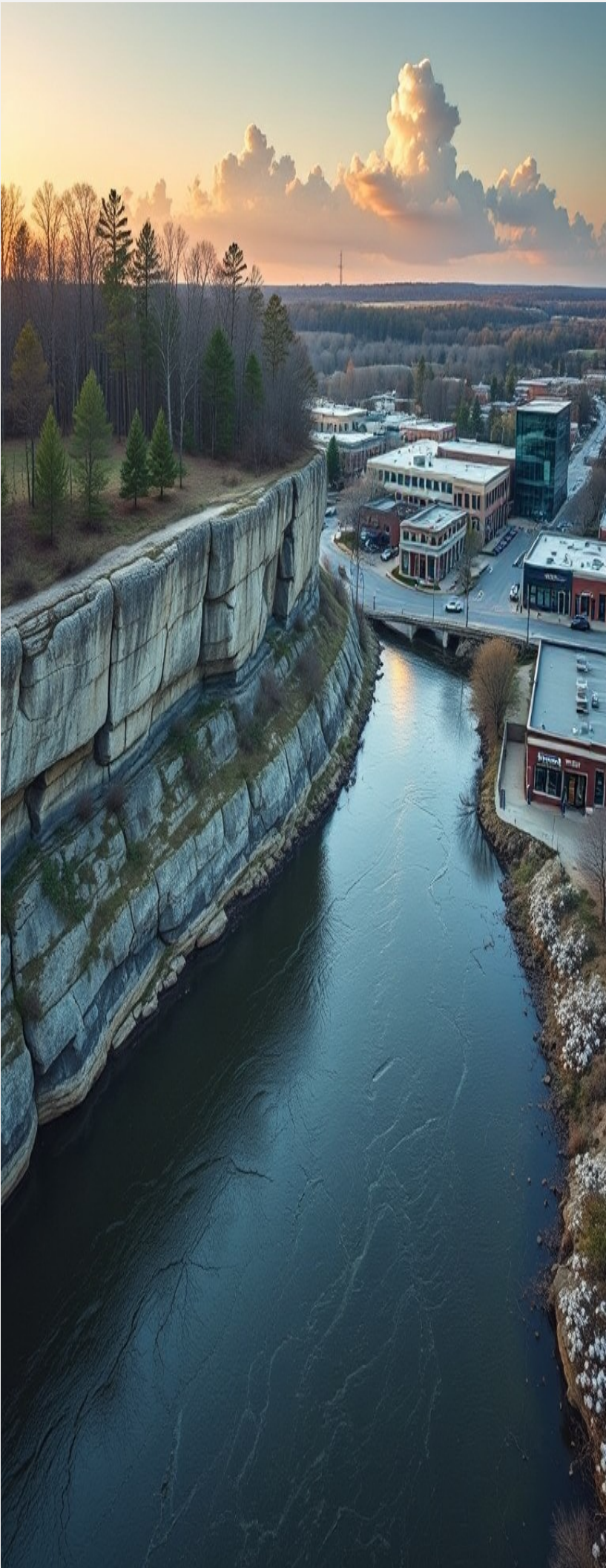
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 • ALEX Intelligence computation
<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-09-22-huntsville-value-to-income-place-mkt>



01

Affordability is a local, not regional, issue

The fact that Athens leads the region in home value-to-income ratio — despite being part of the same economic ecosystem as Huntsville — shows that affordability is not a blanket phenomenon. It is concentrated in specific communities where development has outpaced income growth. This suggests that policies aimed at broad-based affordability may miss the mark if they don't target high-pressure micro-markets like Athens, Meridianville, and Hartselle.



02

Growth is not equally shared

The same economic forces that drive innovation in Huntsville — defense, aerospace, and tech — are fueling rapid price appreciation in nearby towns. But the benefits are not evenly distributed. Workers in these high-cost towns may see wage growth, but not at the same pace as home prices. This creates a subtle but powerful divergence: a region growing in aggregate, yet becoming more unequal in access to housing.

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

Diane Hart Alexander, MBA, MHA

Chair & CEO, ALEX Companies

Designated Broker, Alexander Tiffany Southwest, LLC dba ALEX.realestate, et.al.

Texas License #574877-B · Broker License #565194-BB

diane@alex.realestate · +1 713.591.9902

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