

Denver — #1 of 10: Income Gap Between Arriving and Departing Households

Denver's incoming households earn less than those leaving

A new migration data ranking reveals a widening income divide

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THE DATA

1.7%

Income Gap Between Arriving and Departing Households (2023)

Denver has the highest income gap among U.S. metro counties based on IRS migration data from 2022-23.

This 1.7% gap indicates that households moving into Denver earn, on average, less than those departing. This is not a national trend but a localized phenomenon, with Denver leading among all U.S. metro counties in this metric. The data reflects a shift in economic composition: high-income residents are leaving, while lower-income households are arriving, possibly due to rising costs and shifting employment patterns.

Source: U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Statistics of Income Migration Data, county-to-county inflows, 2022-23 · ALEX Intelligence computation

<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-10-13-denver-mig-agi-gap>

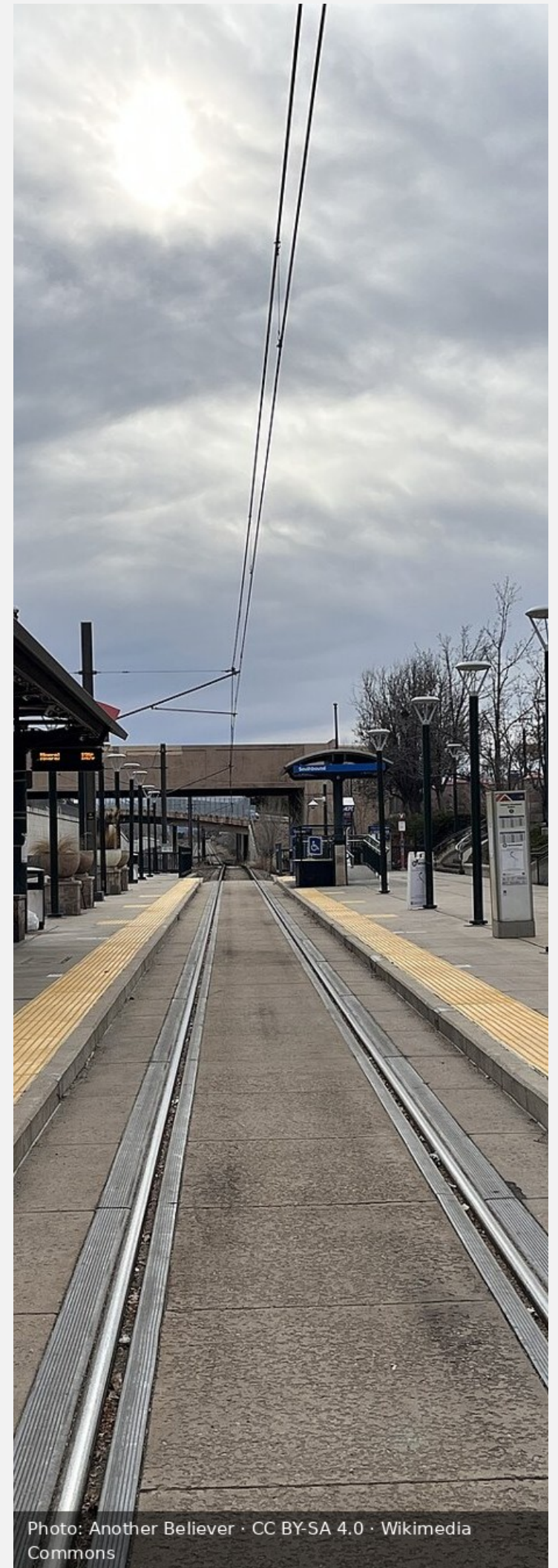


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01

The city is becoming a net loser of high earners

Denver's top income gap isn't just a statistical oddity—it signals a structural shift. High-income professionals, likely from California, New York, and Washington, are departing as affordability pressures mount. Their exit, combined with lower-income in-migration, is altering the city's economic fabric. This trend could undermine long-term housing stability and strain public services, especially in neighborhoods with high displacement risk.

02

The gap fuels a new kind of affordability crisis

While median prices remain high, the income gap reveals that affordability is not just about price—it's about who can afford to live here. The influx of lower-income households, even if they are not priced out of buying, faces increasing pressure due to wage stagnation and rising rents. This dynamic, confirmed by the Kansas City Fed's report on elevated poverty thresholds, suggests that Denver's affordability challenge is not just about housing costs but about unequal access to opportunity.



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