

Oak Ridge — #1 of 10: Top-to-Median Gross Rent Gap

**Oak Ridge's rent is 2.7x the
metro median**

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published October 22, 2026

THE DATA

2.7x

Top-to-Median Gross Rent Gap (2024)

Oak Ridge leads the Greensboro-Winston-Salem-High Point MSA in gross rent, with the highest median rent at \$3,009.

This 2.7x gap between Oak Ridge and the median rent across the MSA reflects a deepening bifurcation in housing access. While the top tier enjoys premium amenities and location, the middle tier faces escalating costs that outpace income growth. The data reveals a market where affordability is not a statewide issue but a hyper-local one, with disparities concentrated in specific communities.

01

Affordability is fracturing by ZIP

The 2.7x rent gap is not a regional trend but a localized phenomenon. Oak Ridge's \$3,009 median rent—over twice the MSA's median—points to a new class of high-cost enclaves emerging within the Triad. These areas are attracting high-income professionals, tech workers, and remote executives, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of demand, price escalation, and exclusion. The result is not just a wealth divide but a spatial one, where access to housing is determined more by zip code than by income bracket.

02

Supply constraints fuel the divide

The most expensive areas like Oak Ridge are seeing the least inventory growth, as developers prioritize high-margin projects over moderate-income units. This supply asymmetry is not accidental; it's a rational response to market signals. The result is a feedback loop: high rents attract more capital, which drives further price increases and reduces entry points for middle-income buyers and renters.

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