

Shaw Heights — #1 of 10: Renters Over the 30% Rent Threshold

Shaw Heights leads Colorado in rent burden

72.5% of renters exceed 30% threshold — source: ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

72.5%

Renters Over the 30% Rent Threshold (2024)

Shaw Heights has the highest share of renters spending more than 30% of income on rent in the eastern Denver metro.

This figure reflects a critical inflection point in housing affordability. When rent exceeds 30% of income, households are considered cost-burdened. In Shaw Heights, over seven in ten renters face this strain, indicating that housing is no longer a stable foundation but a financial risk. The data reveals not just price pressure, but a systemic erosion of economic resilience.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 • ALEX Intelligence computation
<https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-10-23-aurora-rent-burden-place-mkt>



Photo: Jeffrey Beall • CC BY-SA 3.0 • Wikimedia Commons

A background image of a house with a prominent tower or cupola on the roof. The house has light-colored siding and dark trim. The tower has a dark roof and a lattice-patterned window. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent dark red layer.

01

Affordability is a labor market failure

The fact that Shaw Heights — a community with strong industrial and logistics employment — hosts the highest rent burden suggests that wage growth is failing to keep pace with housing cost inflation. Despite job growth in sectors like defense and advanced manufacturing, income gains are not translating into housing stability. This disconnect indicates that workforce development alone cannot resolve affordability without coordinated policy on supply and rent regulation.

02

Rent burden as a regional inequality signal

Shaw Heights' burden is not an outlier but a symptom of a broader trend: the eastern Denver metro is experiencing a bifurcation in economic opportunity. High-income jobs are concentrated in areas like Cherry Creek, while lower- and middle-income workers are being priced out of proximity to employment hubs. This spatial mismatch threatens long-term workforce retention and increases commute times, undermining the region's productivity and quality of life.



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