ZIP 29036 — #1 of 10: Top-to-Median Gross Rent Gap

Columbia's Top ZIP Rent is 1.8x the Median

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published November 06, 2026

Swipe for insights →

Photo: w_lemay · CC BY-SA 2.0 · Wikimedia Commons

THE DATA

1.8x

Top-to-Median Gross Rent Gap (2024)

ZIP 29036 leads the Midlands in gross rent, at $2,011 per month.

This 1.8x gap between the highest and middle tiers of rent in the Midlands reveals a deepening divide in affordability. This is not a trend driven by new construction, but by entrenched market positioning and selective access to amenities.



Photo: LostNarwal · CC BY-SA 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-06-columbia-sc-spread-gross-rent-zcta

01

Affordability is a spatial illusion

The 1.8x rent gap shows that 'affordability' in Columbia is not a uniform condition but a function of ZIP code geography. metros. This spatial inequality is not accidental; it reflects decades of zoning, infrastructure investment, and private-sector capital allocation that have concentrated value in a single ZIP.

Photo: Tony Crescibene · CC BY-SA 3.0 · Wikimedia Commons


Photo: Eastward Gypsy · CC BY-SA 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons

02

The rent gap rewards access, not just location

ZIP 29036's dominance is not due to proximity to the downtown core alone. It is the only ZIP in the top 10 with a direct connection to the state's major intermodal corridor and a concentration of high-income employment zones within a 10-minute drive. The 1.8x gap is less about land value and more about network access — a real estate premium for being in the right data path. As AI-driven logistics and remote work infrastructure expand, this ZIP may become a de facto node for high-value tenants, further entrenching its dominance.

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

ALEX

ALEX Intelligence
deep intelligence

ALEX Real Estate
genius real estate

ALEX Advisory
uncontested strategy

ALEX Cares
purposeful philanthropy