#1 of 2: Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Median Rent in the Market

Travis County leads Austin in rent disparity

1.49x gap between highest and lowest county rent — source: ALEX Intelligence, 2026

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THE DATA

1.49x

Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Median Rent in the Market (2024)

Austin’s rent spread across counties is the widest in Texas, with Travis County far exceeding Caldwell County.

This 1.49x gap reflects deepening economic divergence within the Austin metro. Travis County, home to the city’s core and high-demand tech corridors, commands significantly higher rents. In contrast, Caldwell County, while growing, remains more affordable, drawing residents seeking lower costs without sacrificing proximity to the metro. This divergence is not just about price — it signals a bifurcation in access to opportunity and infrastructure.



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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-25-austin-msa-within-county-gross-rent

01

Affordability is fracturing the metro

The 1.49x rent gap reveals that the Austin metro is no longer a single housing market but two distinct zones. Travis County, with its concentration of innovation hubs and high-income employment, sustains premium rents. Meanwhile, Caldwell County offers a growing alternative for workers priced out of the core, reinforcing a pattern of economic segregation. This is not a temporary trend — it’s structural, driven by the location of jobs, not just housing supply.

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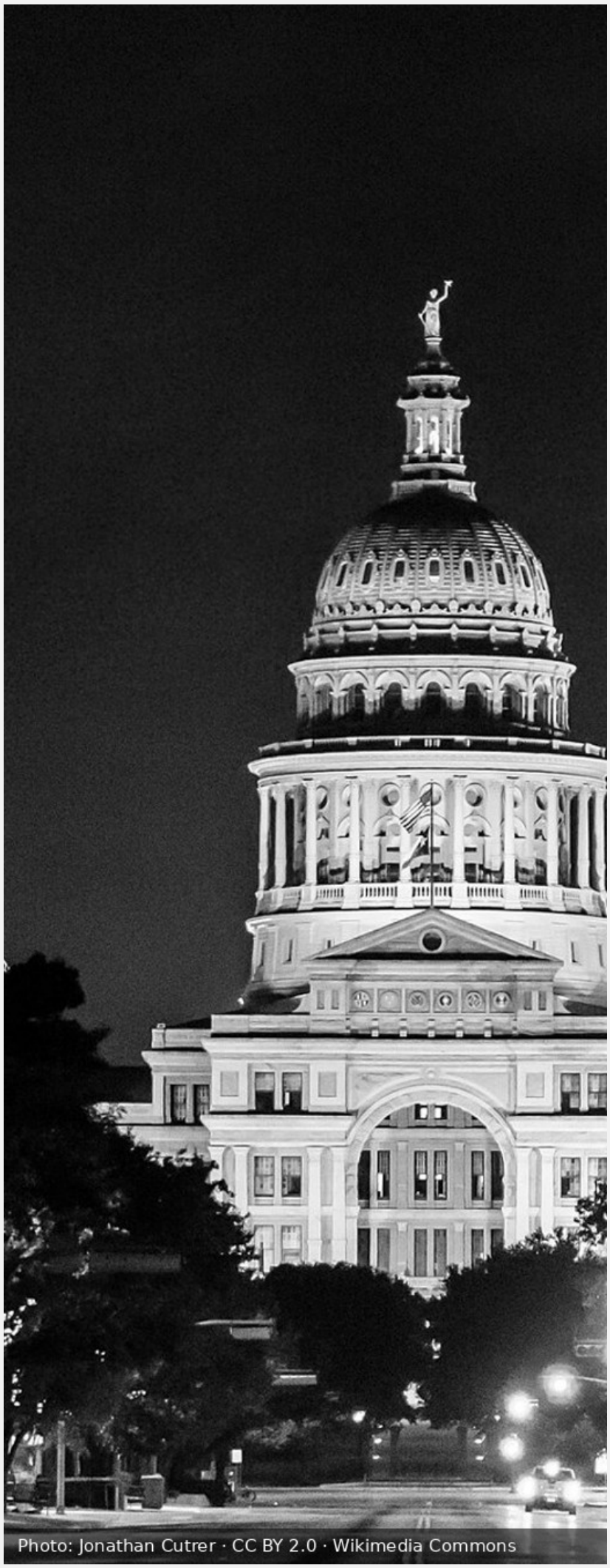


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02

Rents are becoming a proxy for access

The disparity in median rent between Travis and Caldwell Counties isn't just about cost — it's about access. High rents in Travis County correlate with access to high-paying tech jobs, elite schools, and dense transit. In Caldwell County, lower rents reflect lower access to these assets, even as commute times to the core increase. This rent divide may soon influence workforce mobility, with employees choosing affordability over proximity — a shift that could reshape the city's economic center of gravity over the next decade.

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