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

Comal County Leads Texas in Rent Disparity

Within the San Marcos-New Braunfels MSA, Comal outpaces Hays by 1.07x

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THE DATA

1.07x

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

This 1.07x ratio reflects a deepening spatial divide in affordability across the MSA. While both Hays and Comal counties are experiencing strong growth, Comal's higher rents suggest a concentration of premium housing and higher-income residents, possibly due to proximity to natural amenities and established communities. This divergence may signal a bifurcation in development patterns, with Hays County retaining more mid-market accessibility.



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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-san-marcos-nb-within-county-gross-rent

01

Affordability is no longer uniform

The 1.07x rent gap between Comal and Hays County reveals that affordability is not a regional constant but a county-specific condition. This challenges the assumption that the entire San Marcos-New Braunfels MSA shares a single housing market. Instead, the MSA is evolving into two distinct submarkets: Comal, with higher rents and likely higher income density, and Hays, which may serve as a more accessible entry point for new residents. This could influence future zoning, infrastructure planning, and investment flows.

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02

Rent disparity drives migration stratification

As Comal County's rents rise faster than Hays', the MSA may be experiencing a form of internal migration sorting. High-income households may be concentrating in Comal, drawn by established communities and amenities, while mid-income and first-time buyers may be shifting toward Hays County. This could lead to long-term demographic divergence: Comal may develop a more homogeneous, higher-income profile, while Hays retains greater diversity and affordability. Over time, this may affect school funding, public services, and political dynamics within the MSA.

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