#1 of 6: Ratio of Highest to Lowest County Median Rent in the Market

Richland County's rent is 1.44x Saluda's — SC's widest gap

Based on 2024 ACS data, ALEX Intelligence

Swipe for insights →

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

THE DATA

1.44x

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

Richland County's median rent is $1,228; Saluda County's is $851 — the largest disparity in South Carolina.

While Richland County continues to attract high-income professionals and tech workers, Saluda County remains constrained by lower wage growth and limited infrastructure investment. The gap is not just about housing — it signals divergent development trajectories within the same metro area.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-27-columbia-sc-within-county-gross-rent



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



01

Rent disparity fuels unequal mobility

The long-term risk is a shrinking labor pool in Saluda and a housing affordability crisis in Richland — both undermining regional economic resilience. Without coordinated policy, the gap may entrench inequality across generations.

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



Photo: Childofwalrus · CC BY 4.0 · Wikimedia Commons

02

Disparity as a strategic investment signal

The real estate sector must respond not with one-size-fits-all policies, but with targeted interventions: infrastructure in Saluda, workforce housing in Richland, and cross-county transit planning. The Midlands isn't broken — it's evolving in a way that rewards foresight.

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