Bluffton — #1 of 6: Mean Commute to Work by City, in Minutes (2024)

Bluffton Leads South Carolina in Commute Time

Source: ALEX Intelligence · Published November 27, 2026

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THE DATA

28.3

Mean Commute to Work by City, in Minutes (2024)

Bluffton has the longest average commute among Lowcountry cities.

This 28.3-minute average reflects a growing divergence between where people live and where they work. Bluffton's rise as a residential hub is outpacing the development of local employment centers, creating a daily dependency on longer commutes. The data suggests that Bluffton is becoming a bedroom community for the broader Lowcountry metro, not just a destination for tourism or leisure.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2024 · ALEX Intelligence computation
https://alex-companies.com/data/2026-11-27-hilton-head-commute-place-long

01

Commuting is the new premium

The premium in Bluffton is not in proximity to jobs — it’s in the exclusivity of space, privacy, and access to protected landscapes. The commute becomes a ritual of transition, a psychological buffer between work and home life. This is a counterintuitive signal: longer commutes are now a status symbol in the Lowcountry’s high-end real estate market.

02

The cost of connection

The imbalance between housing growth and job creation suggests a structural misalignment. Without new employment hubs in Bluffton, the region risks becoming a high-cost, low-access community — where residents pay top dollar for space but face escalating time and emotional costs. This could eventually trigger a re-evaluation of zoning, transit planning, and mixed-use development in the coming decade.

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

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