Trends Over Time in County & Statewide Property Tax Burdens

Final Report - 11/03/26

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Introduction

Context & Research Question

This report presents analysis in support of the work being conducted by the Maine Real Estate Property Tax Relief Task Force. As part of that work, the Task Force wishes to understand the extent to which property tax bills are increasing on average across Maine, centered on the following research question:

How have property taxes been trending over time in Maine, both in absolute terms and relative to incomes and property values, and what is the relationship between municipal spending and inflation?

Data & Methods

Our Mid-2026 Report included a Time Trends section which analyzed this question, but it was constrained by the use of 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, which meant that the reported time series could not extend beyond 2022. This short report focuses on trends at the state and county levels, which enables the use of 1-year ACS estimates and time trends which extend to include 2025.

It incorporates the 2025 ACS 1-year estimates, released by the Census Bureau on 29 October 2026, and data from the preliminary 2025 Municipal Valuation Return (MVR) statistical summary, which was shared by Maine Revenue Services in early October 2026. Please note that the 2025 MVR data is based on the 2027 State Valuation, which remains preliminary as of the publication of this report. It is possible that there will be further changes to the MVR data prior to certification in February 2027.

Report Outline

To understand the extent to which there is an urgent need for property tax relief in Maine due to increases in the tax burden over time, this report measures that burden through three different lenses: the effective tax rate paid by property owners; the absolute dollar value of tax bills; and how property taxes have moved relative to incomes.

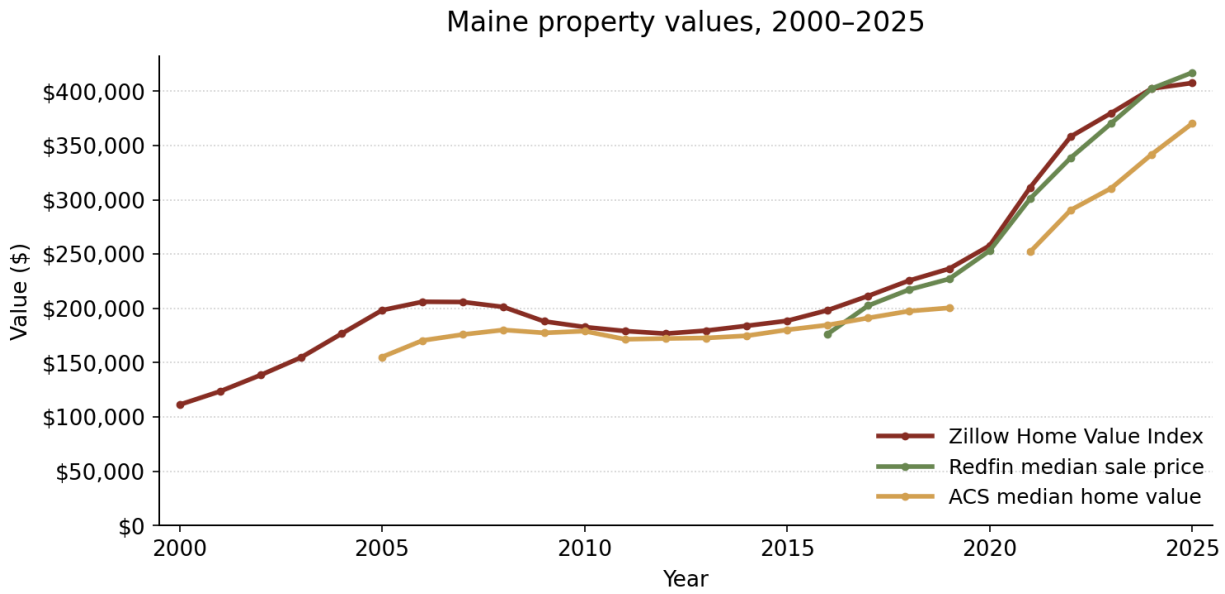
The statewide section traces these lenses through five related measures: residential property values; the total property tax commitment (the amount raised to fund municipal, school and county services), set against inflation and broken down into its components; the effective tax rate; the resulting tax bills; and tax bills as a share of household income. It also tests whether rising municipal spending is concentrated in particular types of municipality. The final section repeats the analysis for the six counties for which 1-year ACS estimates are available: Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Kennebec, Penobscot and York. The Census Bureau publishes 1-year estimates only for areas of at least 65,000 residents, because a single year of the survey samples too few households in smaller areas to produce reliable figures.

Statewide Time Trends

Property taxes are charged against property value, so we begin by analyzing growth in residential property values over time.

Residential Property Values Over Time

Four external sources track Maine residential property values over time: the Zillow Home Value Index, Redfin's median sale price, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) House Price Index, and the American Community Survey (ACS) median home value. All four tell the same story: flat years following the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, followed by moderate growth before the COVID-19 pandemic, a rapid run-up after 2020, and signs that the run-up is now slowing.



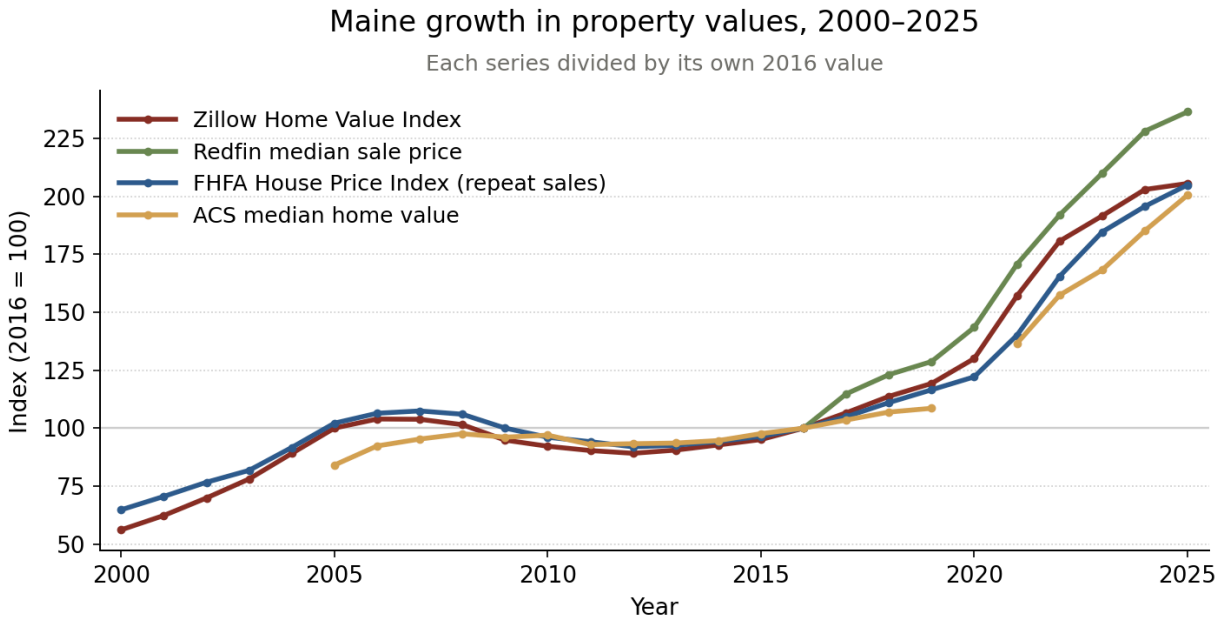
Sources: Zillow ZHVI (all homes, mid-tier); Redfin Data Center (all residential, NSA; from 2016); ACS 1-year B25077. ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

Statewide property values, 2000-2025

The ACS figure sits below the other two because it measures something narrower: the value owners place on the homes they live in. Zillow and Redfin also capture rental homes and second homes. That difference matters more in Maine than almost anywhere else, because the state's many high-value coastal and lakefront second homes lift the Zillow and Redfin figures. Owners also tend to report values below what the market would pay, which pulls the ACS lower still. Because the homestead exemption applies only to owner-occupied homes, the ACS measure is the most relevant to the tax burden on Maine households, and it is the one we use to estimate the typical homeowner's tax bill later in this report.

Since the pandemic, the value of the typical Maine home has nearly doubled. In 2025, Zillow places the typical home at about $408,000 and Redfin's median sale price at about $417,000. The run-up is now slowing: Zillow rose just 1.3% in 2025, compared with roughly 11% a year

from 2019 to 2024. Whether rising values have translated into rising tax bills is the question the rest of this section examines.



Sources: Zillow ZHVI; Redfin Data Center (all residential, NSA; from 2016); FHFA annual all-transactions HPI (developmental county/state indexes); ACS 1-year B25077. ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

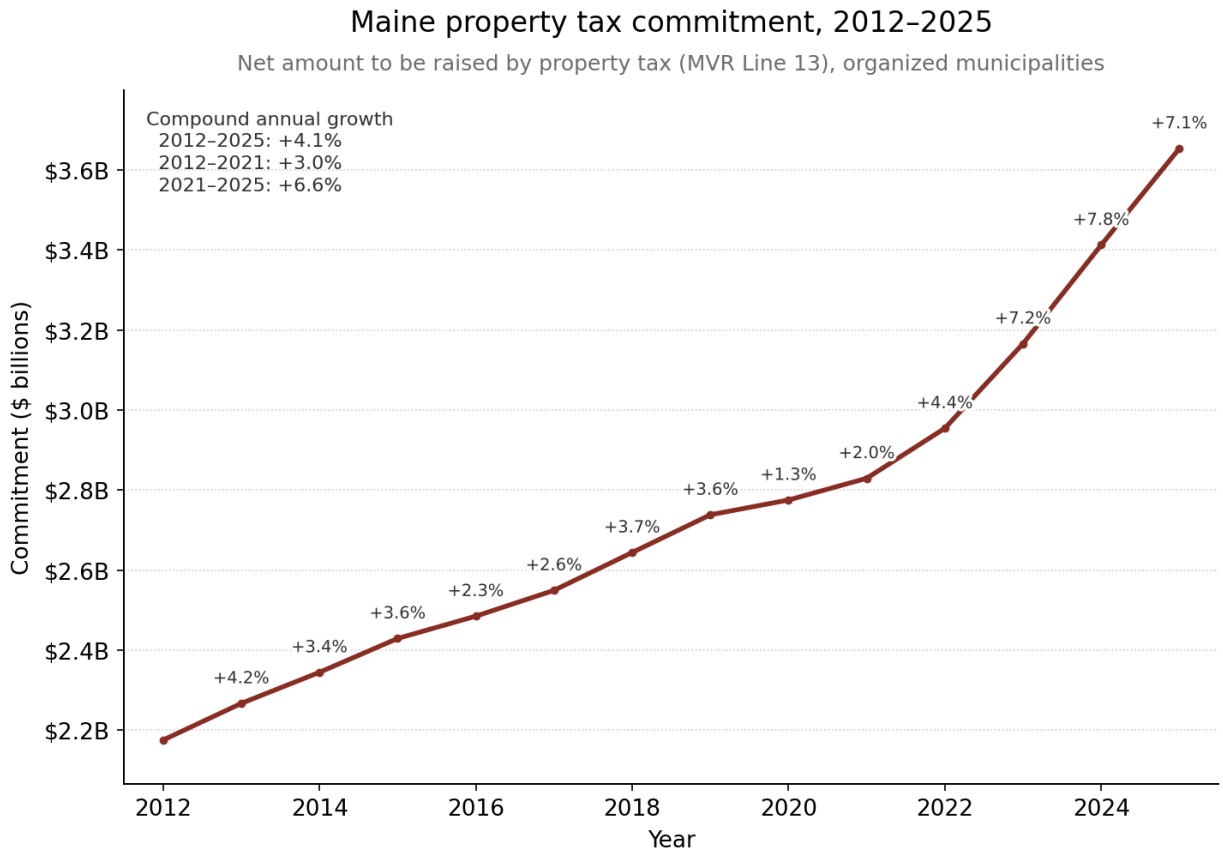
Statewide property value indices, 2000-2025

To compare changes in property values across all four sources (including the FHFA index), we index each series to their 2016 value. Zillow, FHFA and the ACS all end up at about the same point by 2025, roughly double their 2016 levels. Redfin grew faster than the other series, likely because it reports the median price of homes that actually sold, which rises whenever more expensive homes make up a larger share of sales. Zillow and FHFA, by contrast, track the value of the same homes over time.

Rising property values do not, on their own, raise property taxes. Many people reasonably assume that their tax bill has risen because their home's value has risen. But each municipality sets its mill rate by dividing its property tax commitment (the amount raised to fund county, municipal and school services) by the total taxable value of all property in the municipality. Rising values enlarge the denominator of that calculation, so they lower tax rates unless spending rises just as fast. As this report will show, that is what happened in Maine. Between 2019 and 2025, property values rose by more than 70% while the property tax commitment rose by about a third, and the statewide mill rate fell from 1.64% to 1.28% of taxable value. The path of tax bills therefore depends on the spending decisions of counties, municipalities and school boards, which the next section examines.

Property Tax Commitment Over Time

If property values are the base on which property taxes are levied, the property tax commitment is the amount that must be raised from that tax base. It is the total that Maine's municipalities levy through the property tax each year to fund municipal services, local schools and county government, after accounting for revenues from State revenue-sharing, reimbursement of the homestead exemption, and other sources. Because each town's mill rate is its commitment divided by its taxable value, the property tax commitment is what ultimately determines how much property owners pay.



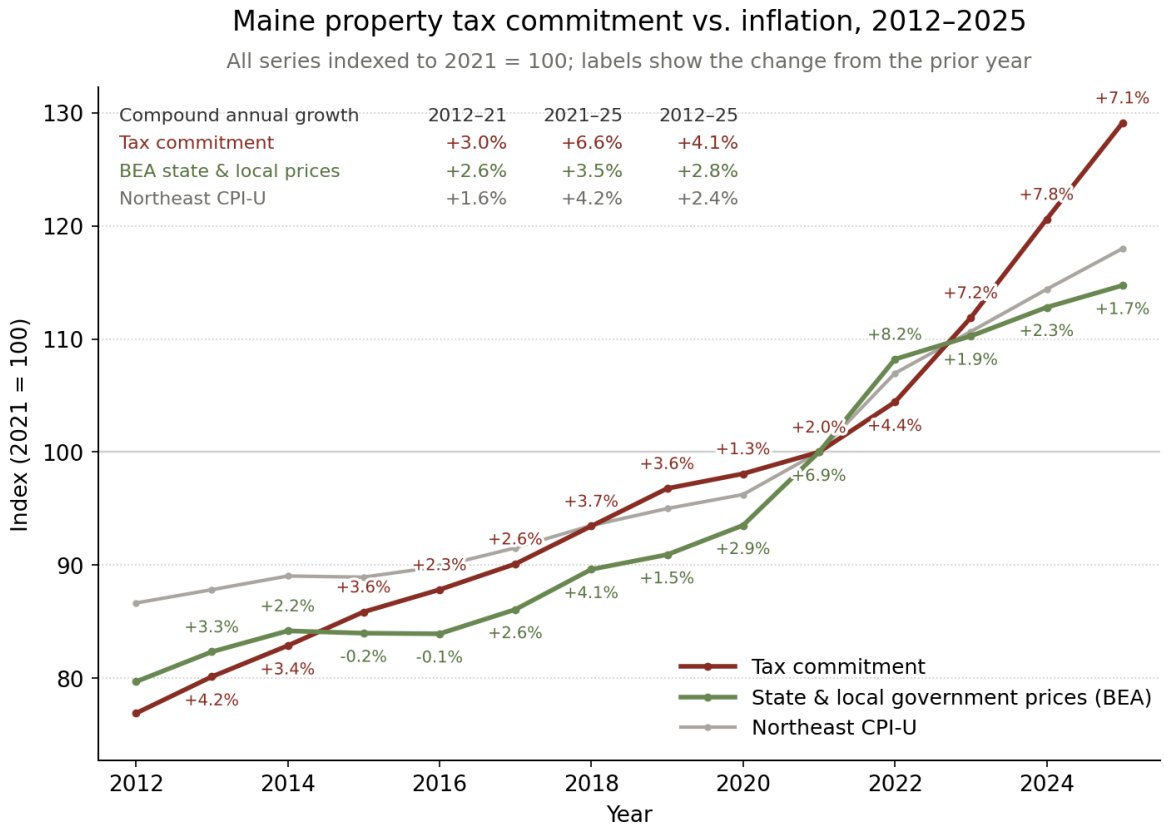
Source: Maine Revenue Services, Municipal Valuation Returns 2012–2025, Line 13. Labels show the change from the prior year.

Statewide property tax commitment, 2012-2025

Between 2012 and 2025, the statewide property tax commitment rose from $2.18 billion to $3.65 billion, divided into two distinct phases. Prior to the pandemic, the commitment grew fairly consistently at around 3% a year. Following the pandemic, commitment growth accelerated to just under 7% per year for the 2021-2025 period. Whether this reflects an expansion in the size of local government or the rising cost of providing municipal services requires a comparison against the costs local governments face, which the next section provides.

Commitment Growth in the Context of Cost-Inflation

A rising commitment does not necessarily mean local government is growing. If the cost of staff, fuel and materials rises, municipalities must raise more just to deliver the same services. To separate the two, we compare the commitment against two price measures. The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) price index for state and local government tracks what governments pay for staff, goods, services and construction, so it is the most relevant benchmark for local budgets. The Northeast Consumer Price Index (CPI-U) tracks the prices households pay, and so shows how the property tax burden compares with households' cost of living.



Sources: MRS Municipal Valuation Returns (Line 13); BLS Northeast CPI-U all items (CUUR0100SA0), annual average, 2025 averages 11 months (no October 2025 release); BEA implicit price deflator for state and local government consumption expenditures and gross investment (national; FRED A829RD3A086NBEA).

Indexed property tax commitment vs inflation, 2012-2025

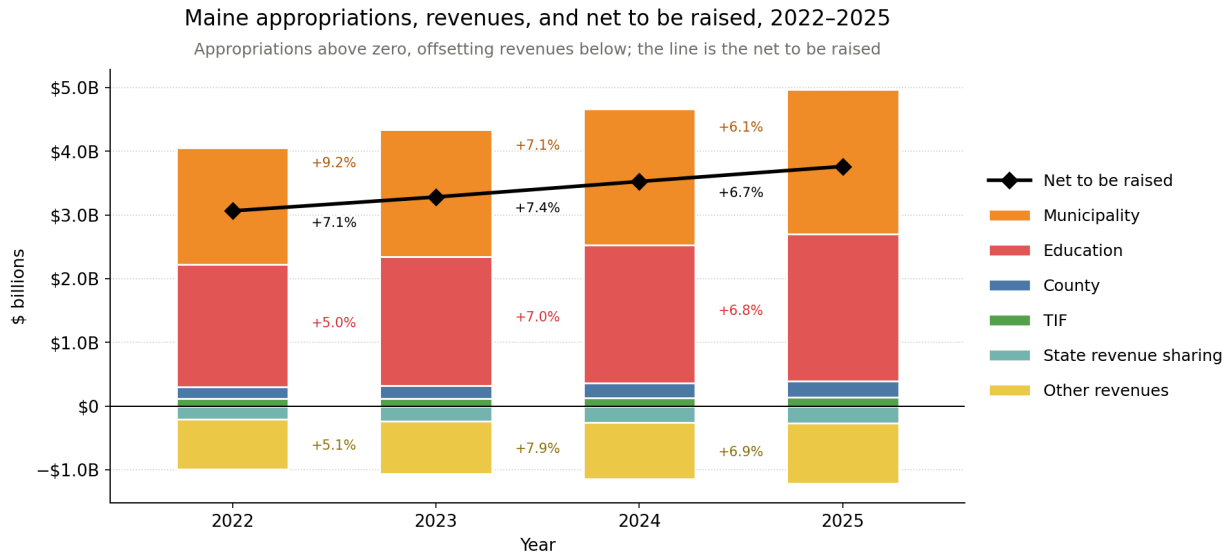
During the 2010s, statewide property tax commitment grew only slightly faster than government costs: 3.0% a year against 2.6%. This is consistent with municipalities providing a broadly stable level of services as their costs rose. During the immediate post-pandemic period, the commitment and the cost of government rose at about the same pace: between 2021 and 2023, the commitment grew 5.8% a year against 5.0% for government costs. Over those years, rising property taxes largely reflected the rising cost of delivering the same local services.

That changed after 2023. Between 2023 and 2025, the commitment grew by an average of 7.4% a year, against 2.0% for government costs and 3.3% for consumer prices. Some of this gap likely reflects a lagged response to the earlier cost shock, plus the fact that compensation for state and local government workers continued to rise by around 4.6% during 2023 and 2024.[1] But that cannot explain the entirety of the divergence. Since around 2023, the statewide property tax commitment has outpaced cost indices.

The data tell us that recent property tax growth has outpaced inflation, but not why. The gap could reflect costs facing Maine municipalities that a national price index does not capture, communities choosing to spend more on schools, roads or other services, or spending that could have been avoided. The next section looks at where in local budgets the growth has occurred.

What Is Driving the Increase?

The property tax commitment is what is left of local budgets after other revenues are counted, so understanding why it has grown means looking at the budgets themselves. For 2022 onward, the Municipal Valuation Return data include each municipality's Tax Rate Calculation Form, which breaks the property tax requirement into its parts. On one side are appropriations: municipal services, the local share of school costs, county tax, and tax increment financing (TIF). On the other are offsetting revenues: state revenue sharing and other revenues such as motor vehicle excise taxes and fees. What remains is the amount to be raised from property tax.



Source: MRS Municipal Valuation Returns, Tax Rate Calculation Form (TRCF) Lines 7–15, organized municipalities; reported from 2022 only. Labels show the change from the prior year. Net to be raised (TRCF Line 15) = appropriations − revenue sharing − other revenues; it is met by the property tax commitment plus state homestead and BETE reimbursements, less overlay.

Total appropriations rose from $4.05 billion in 2022 to $4.97 billion in 2025, or about 7% a year. What drove that growth shifted over the period. In the immediate post-pandemic period,

[1] According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Employment Cost Index (ECI) for government workers.

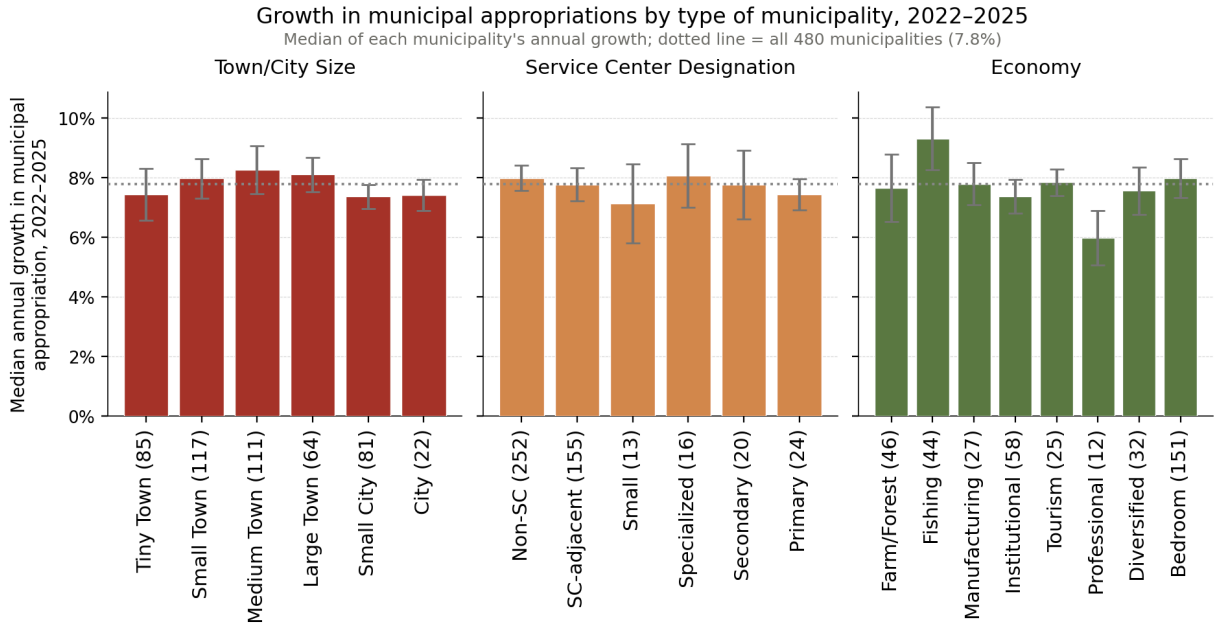
municipal spending led: between 2022 and 2023, municipal appropriations rose 9.2% while the local share of school costs rose 5.0%, so municipalities accounted for almost 60% of the increase. Over the following two years, municipal and school spending grew at about the same rate, around 7% a year each, and contributed almost equally to the increase. County tax is a small share of the total but grew fastest, at about 11% a year.

Offsetting revenues grew at much the same pace as appropriations, so they covered a steady share of budgets, about a quarter, throughout the period. As a result, growth in local budgets passed through to the property tax almost one-for-one.

These figures show where budgets grew, not why. The data cannot tell us whether a given increase reflects higher costs for the same services, a deliberate expansion of local services, or spending that could have been avoided. The education figure also records only the local share of school costs, so it can rise either because school spending rose or because state aid covered less of it. Separating these explanations would require town- and district-level budget detail beyond what the valuation returns provide.

Is Rapid Spending Growth Concentrated in Particular Types of Towns?

To test whether the statewide rise in municipal spending was driven by particular types of municipality, we calculated the increase in each town's municipal appropriations between 2022 and 2025. Spending outpacing inflation turns out to be a feature of the vast majority of Maine's municipalities, not of a few: nearly 90% increased their municipal spending faster than the BEA index, and the median municipality's budget grew 7.8% a year.[2] Nor was the statewide figure driven by a handful of large increases: setting aside the ten municipalities that added the most dollars leaves statewide growth almost unchanged, at 7.4% a year against 7.5%.



Bars: median of the municipalities' compound annual growth rates in the municipal appropriation (Tax Rate Calculation Form Line 8, before offsetting revenues; excludes education, county tax and TIF), with bootstrapped standard errors of the median; number of municipalities in brackets. The 85 tiny towns are absent from the Economy panel (the economic typology does not classify them). Unorganized territories excluded. Source: Maine Revenue Services, Municipal Valuation Return.

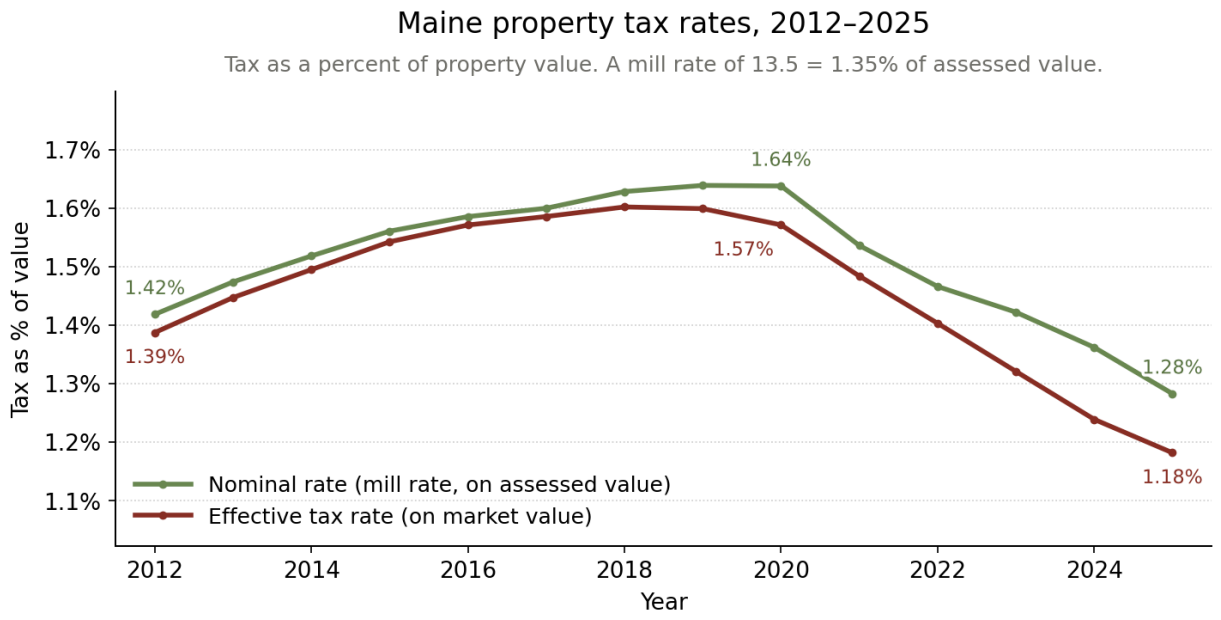
Comparing growth across the municipal classifications used in our Mid-2026 Report (map) shows no notable differences by population size or service-center designation. Likewise, there were no real differences across towns' economic structure, with two exceptions: spending in fishing towns grew noticeably faster than the rest (a median of 9.3% a year), while professional-services towns grew more slowly (6.0%).

Municipal spending outpacing inflation was a statewide phenomenon, not a feature of any particular kind of community.

[2] Note that this figure is calculated solely using municipal appropriations. It excludes appropriations by school districts and counties, as well as state revenue-sharing, meaning that it does not directly translate to growth in property tax bills.

Effective Tax Rates Over Time

The commitment and property values come together in the tax rate: the amount each property owner pays per dollar of property value. Each municipality sets its nominal tax rate, or mill rate, by dividing its commitment by the total taxable value of property in the municipality. Because municipalities assess property at different shares of its market value, nominal rates are hard to compare across towns or over time. We therefore also calculate the effective tax rate (ETR): the nominal rate multiplied by the State's certified ratio, which measures how closely each municipality's assessments track market value. The ETR shows what property owners pay in tax relative to the market value of their property, and is the more meaningful of the two measures.



Nominal rate = commitment ÷ taxable (assessed) value. Effective rate = commitment ÷ market value, where market value = taxable value ÷ certified ratio, by municipality. Source: MRS Municipal Valuation Returns.

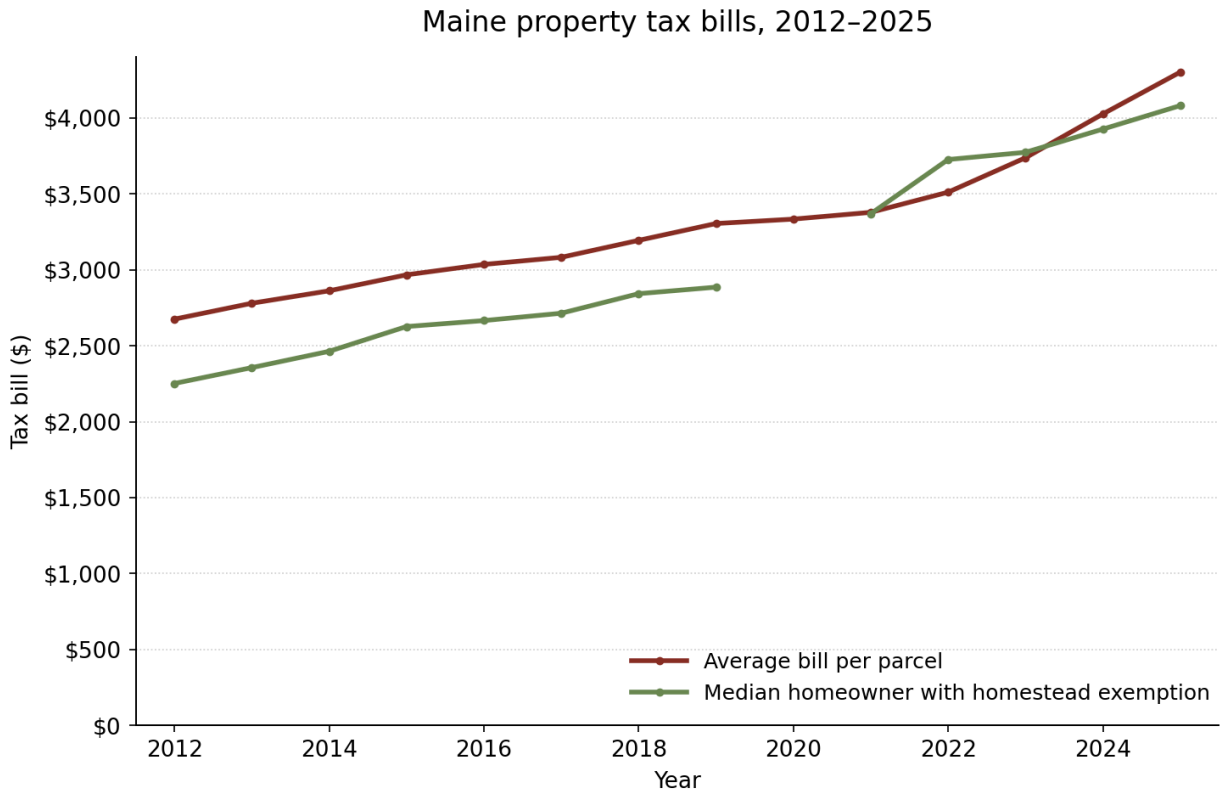
The chart shows how property values and the commitment have pulled against each other. Between 2012 and 2019, the commitment grew much faster than property values (26% against 9%), and the statewide ETR climbed from 1.39% to a peak of 1.60%. After 2019 the relationship reversed. Property values rose about 80% between 2019 and 2025, far outpacing the 33% growth in the commitment, and the ETR fell to 1.18%, well below its 2012 level. Even with the commitment's recent acceleration, values are still rising faster, so the tax rate per dollar of value has continued to fall.

This is a counterintuitive result. Even as tax bills have risen, Maine property owners are paying less tax on each dollar of their property's value than at any point since 2012, because the tax base has grown faster than the levy. It is worth keeping both sides of that in view. Over the same period, most homeowners have seen the value of their home, for many their largest asset, rise substantially, and a higher tax bill on a home that is worth much more is a different situation from a higher bill on a home whose value has stood still. That gain is real, but it is a gain on

paper: it does not pay the tax bill unless the home is sold or borrowed against, and it offers little comfort to households on fixed or modest incomes. Taxpayers experience their bills in dollars, paid from incomes that have not risen nearly as fast as home prices. The next section therefore turns to tax bills themselves.

Average Property Tax Bills Over Time

The measures so far describe the tax base and the tax rate. What households feel is the actual property tax bill. We track these in two ways. The average property tax bill is the total commitment divided by the number of taxable parcels. It covers every kind of property, including commercial and industrial parcels, land and second homes, so it shows the overall level of the property tax. The typical homestead bill focuses on the household. We take the Census Bureau's median value for owner-occupied homes, subtract the homestead exemption in force that year, and multiply by the statewide effective tax rate. The exemption was $10,000 until 2015 and rose in steps to $25,000 by 2020, where it has remained. Of the two measures, the homestead bill comes closer to measuring what a typical homeowning household pays.



Average bill = commitment ÷ land parcels (MVR Line 42; towns not reporting parcels excluded; keying errors repaired).
Median homeowner bill = (ACS 1-year median owner-occupied value − homestead exemption in force that year) × effective tax rate.
ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

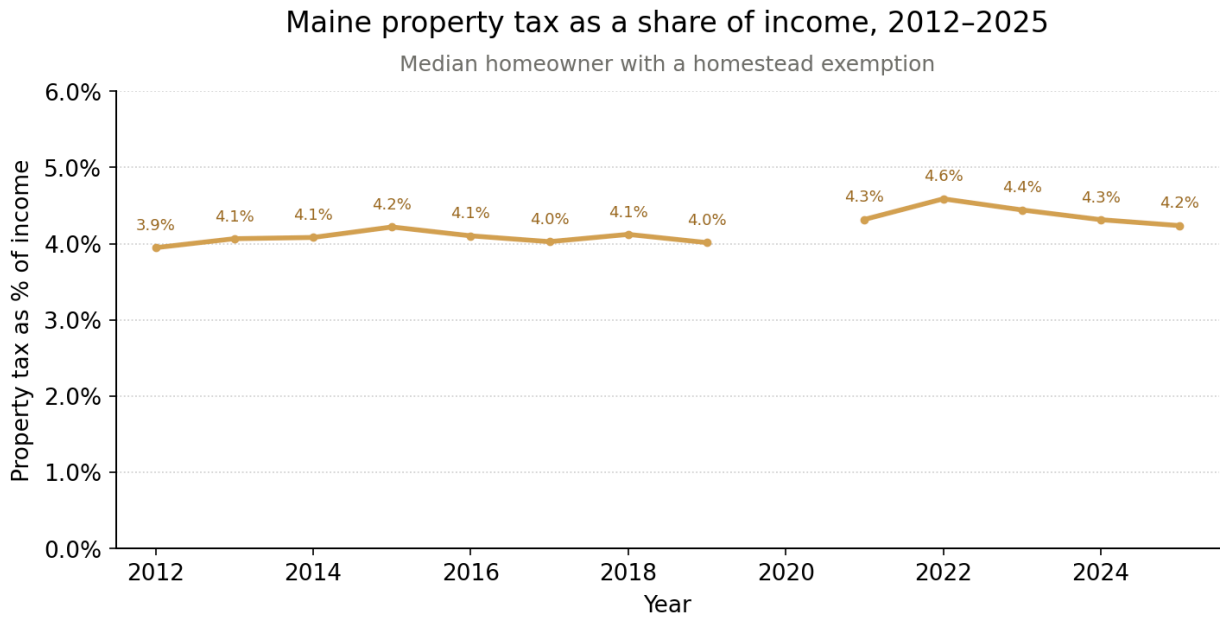
Statewide property tax bills, 2012-2025

On both measures, bills have risen considerably. The typical homestead bill rose from about $2,250 in 2012 to about $4,100 in 2025 (up 81%). The average bill across all parcels rose from about $2,700 to about $4,300 (up 61%). Consumer prices rose by about a third over the same period (36%), so both bills rose much faster than inflation.

A higher property tax bill matters less if household incomes have risen alongside it. Between 2019 and 2025, the typical homestead bill rose 41% while the median homeowner's income rose 34%. The next section looks at that relationship directly.

Property Taxes as a Share of Income Over Time

Tax bills only tell part of the story, because they are paid out of household incomes. Our final measure compares the typical homestead bill with the median income of Maine homeowners.



Tax = (ACS 1-year median owner-occupied value − homestead exemption in force that year) × effective tax rate.
Income = ACS 1-year median household income of owner-occupied households (B25119).
ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

Statewide property tax bills as a share of income, 2012-2025

Before the pandemic, this measure was remarkably stable. Between 2012 and 2019, the typical homeowner spent about 4.1% of household income on property tax, and the share never moved outside a narrow band of 3.9% to 4.2%, because tax bills and incomes grew at similar rates.

Since the pandemic there has been a slight level-shift upward. In 2021 and 2022, the typical homestead bill rose faster than homeowner incomes, and the share of income going to property tax reached 4.6% in 2022. Since then, incomes have grown faster than tax bills: median homeowner income rose 19% between 2022 and 2025, while the typical homestead bill rose about 10%. The share has eased accordingly, falling to 4.2% in 2025, slightly above the pre-pandemic average.

For the typical homeowner, then, the burden has risen, though modestly. This measure describes a household at the middle of the distribution, and it does not capture the experience of some subsets of homeowners whose bills are high relative to their incomes, such as retirees on fixed incomes or those who live alone. For those households the share of income going to property tax can be considerably higher, and they are the focus of the distributional analyses and relief scenarios the Task Force has considered using the Maine Property Tax Relief Explorer.

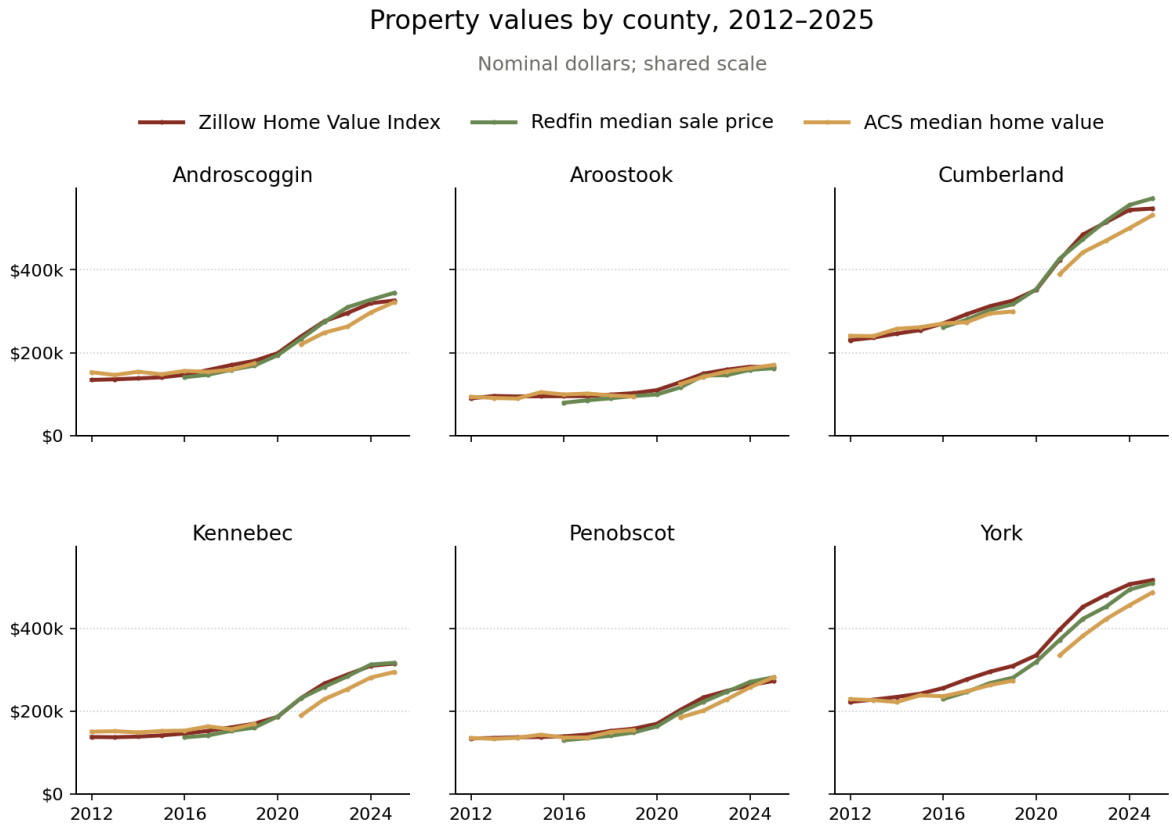
To explore some of those differences across the state, the next section repeats this analysis for 6 of Maine's 16 counties.

Time Trends by County

The statewide analysis describes Maine as a whole, but housing markets, incomes and local budgets differ considerably across the state. This section asks a narrower question: do any regions depart from the statewide pattern in ways that the statewide figures would hide? We repeat the above analyses for the six counties for which the Census Bureau publishes annual (1-year) estimates of home values and incomes: Androscoggin, Aroostook, Cumberland, Kennebec, Penobscot and York. The Census Bureau publishes these estimates only for areas with at least 65,000 residents, so the State's ten smaller counties cannot be analyzed in the same way. Together, the six counties are home to more than three-quarters of Maine's population and cover the state's 24 largest cities as well as its most rural region (Aroostook).

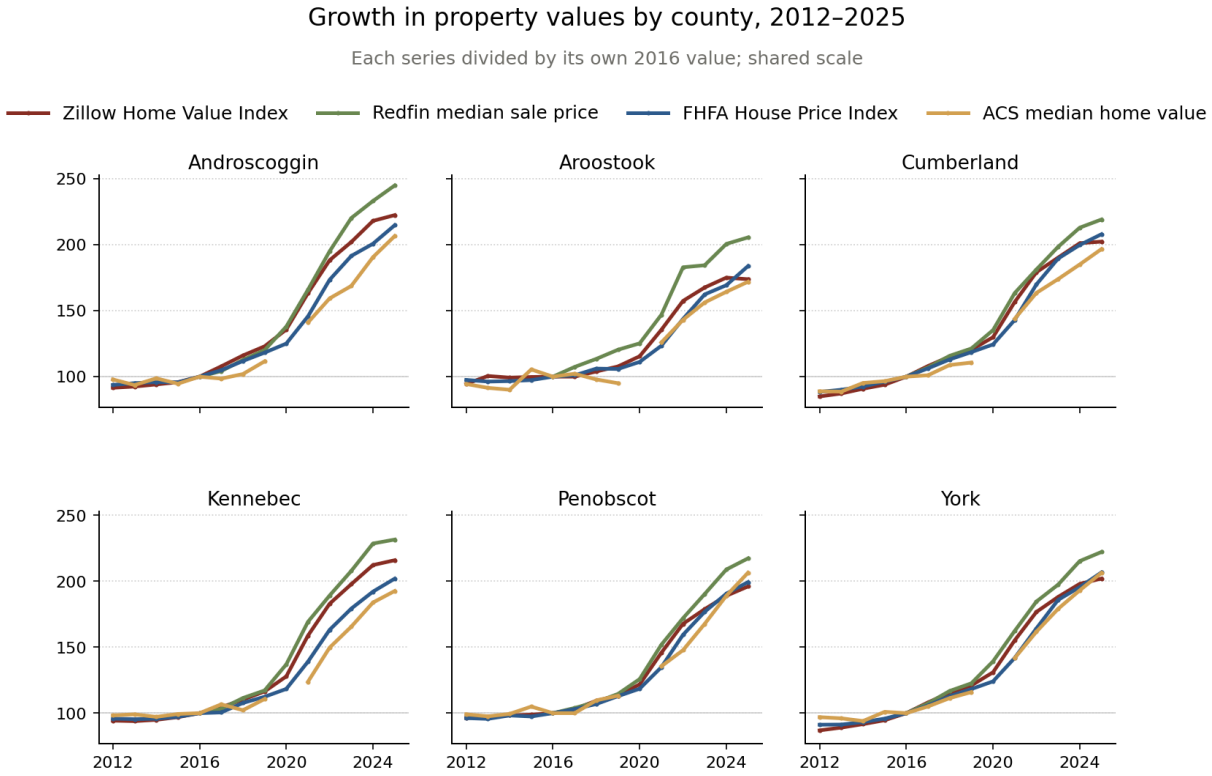
Residential Property Values Over Time

The post-pandemic run-up in home values reached every part of the state. Values differ widely between counties: in 2025, Zillow places the typical home at about $550,000 in Cumberland and $515,000 in York, but about $165,000 in Aroostook. Yet growth since 2019 has been broadly similar everywhere, from about 60% in Aroostook to about 85% in Kennebec, against about 70% statewide. In every county the run-up slowed sharply in 2025.



Sources: Zillow ZHVI (all homes, mid-tier); Redfin Data Center (all residential, NSA; from 2016); ACS 1-year B25077. ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

The counties diverged more before the pandemic than after it. Between 2012 and 2019, values in Cumberland and York rose about 40%, while those in Aroostook and Penobscot rose less than 20%. Since 2019, inland and northern counties have seen growth comparable to the southern coast, so the rise in the tax base that pushed down effective tax rates statewide has occurred across all six counties.



Sources: Zillow ZHVI; Redfin Data Center (all residential, NSA; from 2016); FHFA annual all-transactions HPI (developmental); ACS 1-year B25077. ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

Property Tax Commitment Over Time

The two phases seen statewide appear in every one of the six counties reported. Since 2023, the commitment has grown between 6.4% and 7.7% a year in each county. The recent divergence from costs is therefore not concentrated in any one region.

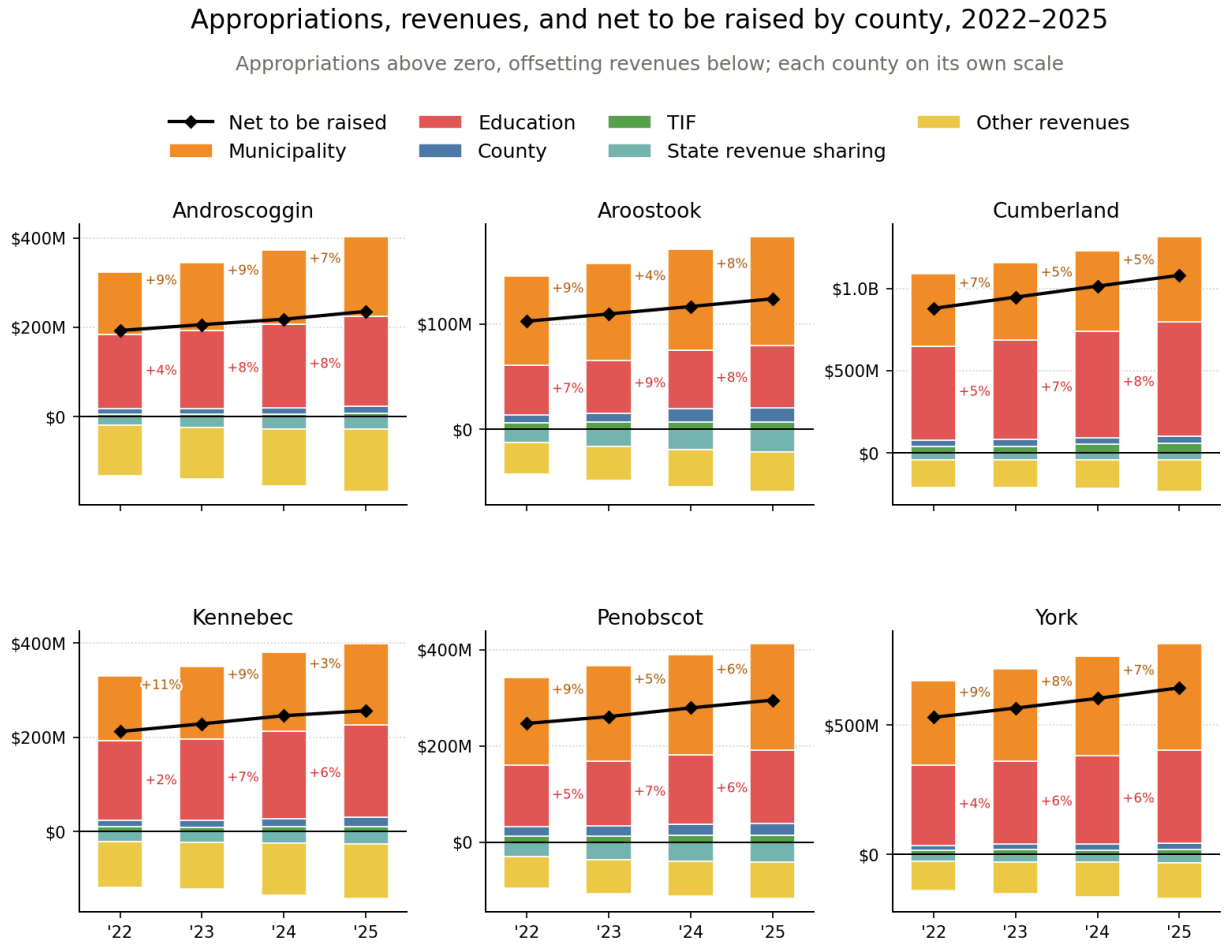


Source: MRS Municipal Valuation Returns 2012–2025. BLS Northeast CPI-U all items (CUUR0100SA0), 2025 averages 11 months. BEA implicit price deflator for state and local government (national; FRED A829RD3A086NBEA).

The differences between counties lie mainly in the earlier years. Before the pandemic, the commitment grew faster in Cumberland, Kennebec and York (about 3.5% a year) than in Androscoggin, Aroostook and Penobscot (under 2.5%). Cumberland alone clearly outpaced costs between 2021 and 2023, while Aroostook and Penobscot lagged costs before accelerating after 2023.

What Is Driving the Increase?

The pattern behind the statewide increase also holds at the county level. In every county, municipal appropriations grew more quickly than the local share of school costs between 2022 and 2023, and both grew steadily after that. Offsetting revenues covered a broadly stable share of appropriations in each county, so budget growth passed through to the property tax everywhere.

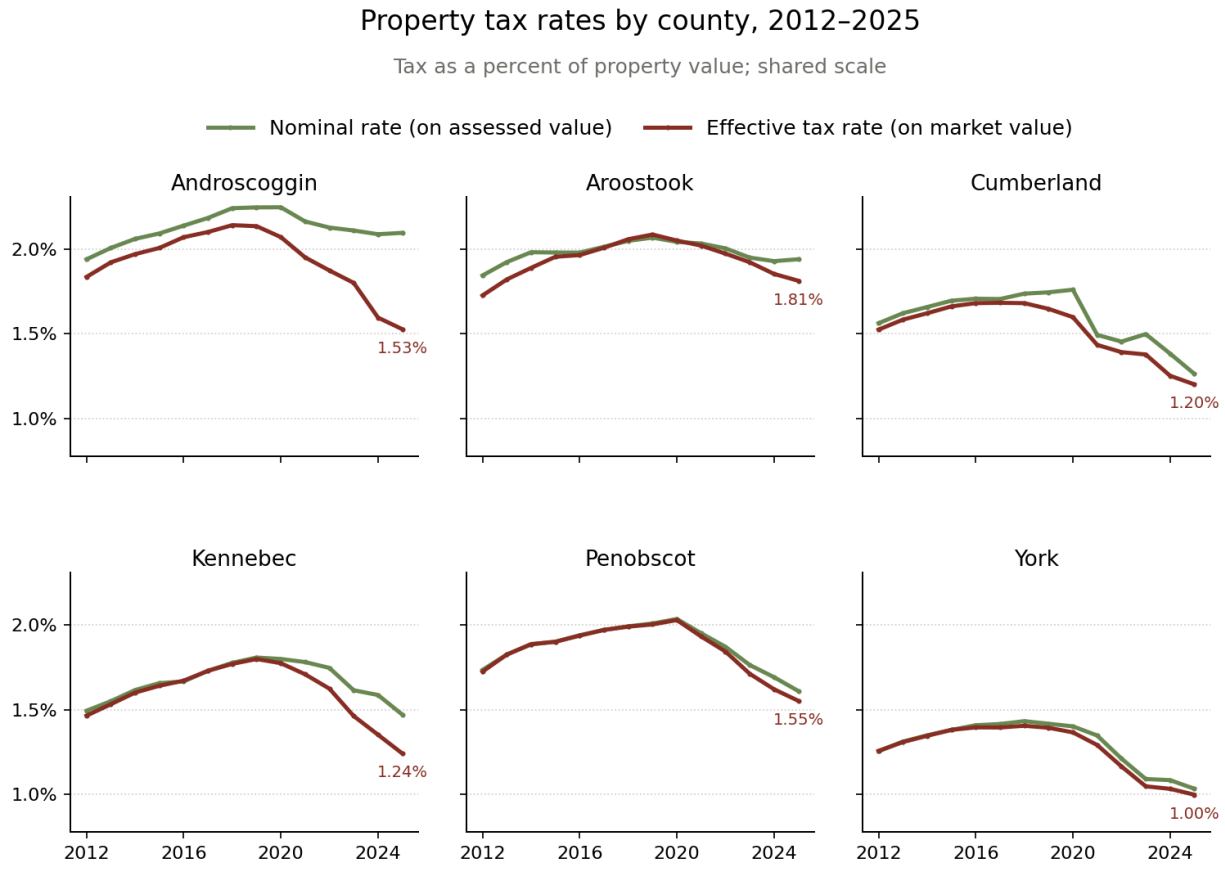


Source: MRS Municipal Valuation Returns, Tax Rate Calculation Form (TRCF) Lines 7–15, organized municipalities; reported from 2022 only. Net to be raised (TRCF Line 15) = appropriations − revenue sharing − other revenues. Labels show the change in municipal and education appropriations from the prior year.

The counties differ most in the balance between municipal and school spending. Cumberland is the one county where education drove most of the increase, accounting for over half the growth in appropriations since 2022. Elsewhere municipal budgets accounted for the larger share, reaching 60% in York. State revenue sharing also covers more than 10% of appropriations in Aroostook and Penobscot but under 4% in Cumberland and York, because its formula sends proportionately more to municipalities with less property wealth relative to their tax burden, which tend to be smaller and more rural.

Effective Tax Rates Over Time

Effective property tax rates have fallen since 2019 in every county, for the same reason as statewide: property values rose much faster than the commitment. By 2025, effective tax rates ranged from 1.00% in York to 1.81% in Aroostook. The lower-value inland and northern counties pay noticeably more per dollar of property value than the southern coast, a gap that predates the pandemic.

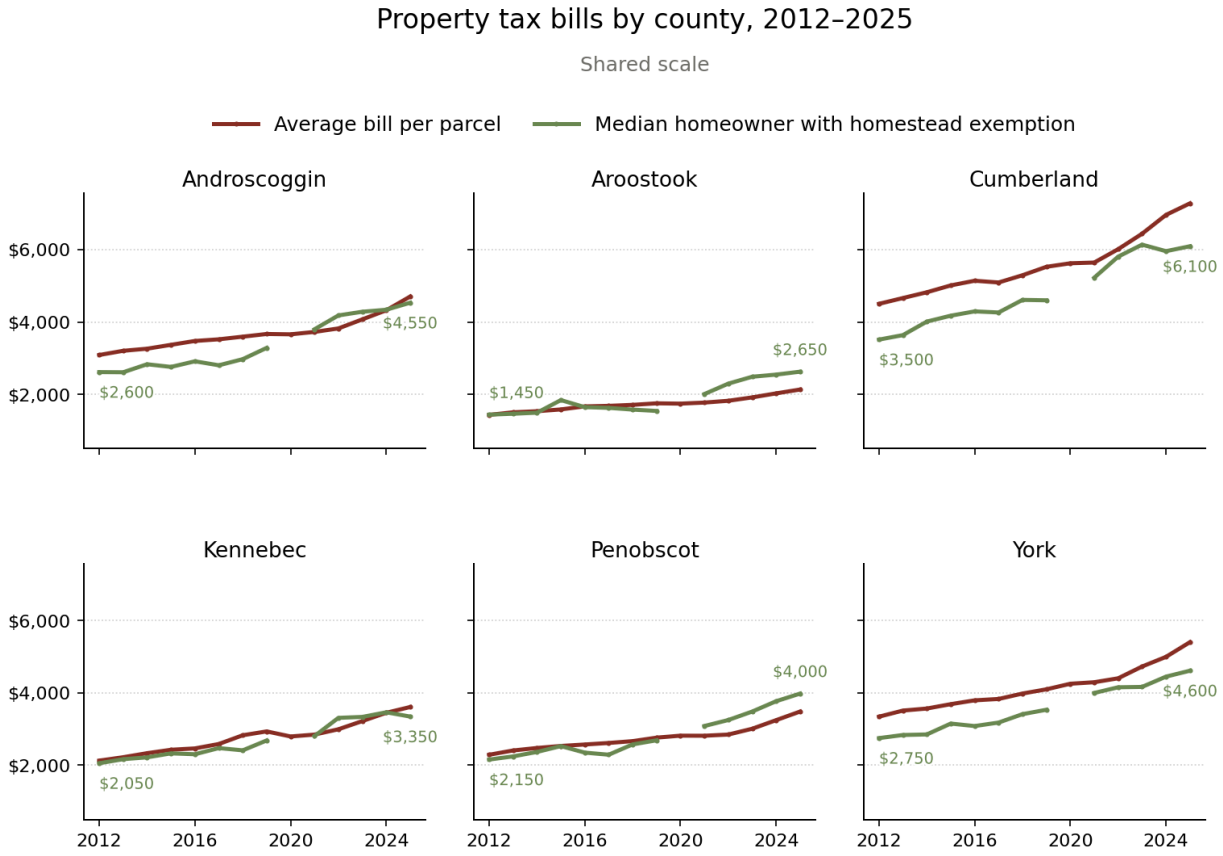


Source: MRS Municipal Valuation Returns 2012–2025.
Effective rate = commitment ÷ market value (taxable value ÷ certified ratio, by municipality).

Aroostook is the exception to the statewide pattern. Its taxable property base grew about 43% between 2019 and 2025, roughly half the growth seen elsewhere, so the commitment's rise was spread over a smaller increase in value. Its effective rate has fallen only modestly from its peak and remains above its 2012 level, making it the only one of the six counties where that is true. Androscoggin also stands out, for a different reason. Its assessments have fallen well behind the market, averaging about 73% of market value in 2025, so its nominal rate (2.09%) considerably overstates the tax its property owners pay relative to their property's value (1.53%).

Average Property Tax Bills Over Time

Tax bills rose substantially in every county, but the dollar amounts differ widely. In 2025, the typical homestead tax bill was about $6,100 in Cumberland and $4,600 in York, against about $2,650 in Aroostook. Between 2012 and 2025, the typical homestead tax bill rose by between 63% (Kennebec) and 85% (Penobscot), compared with 81% statewide.

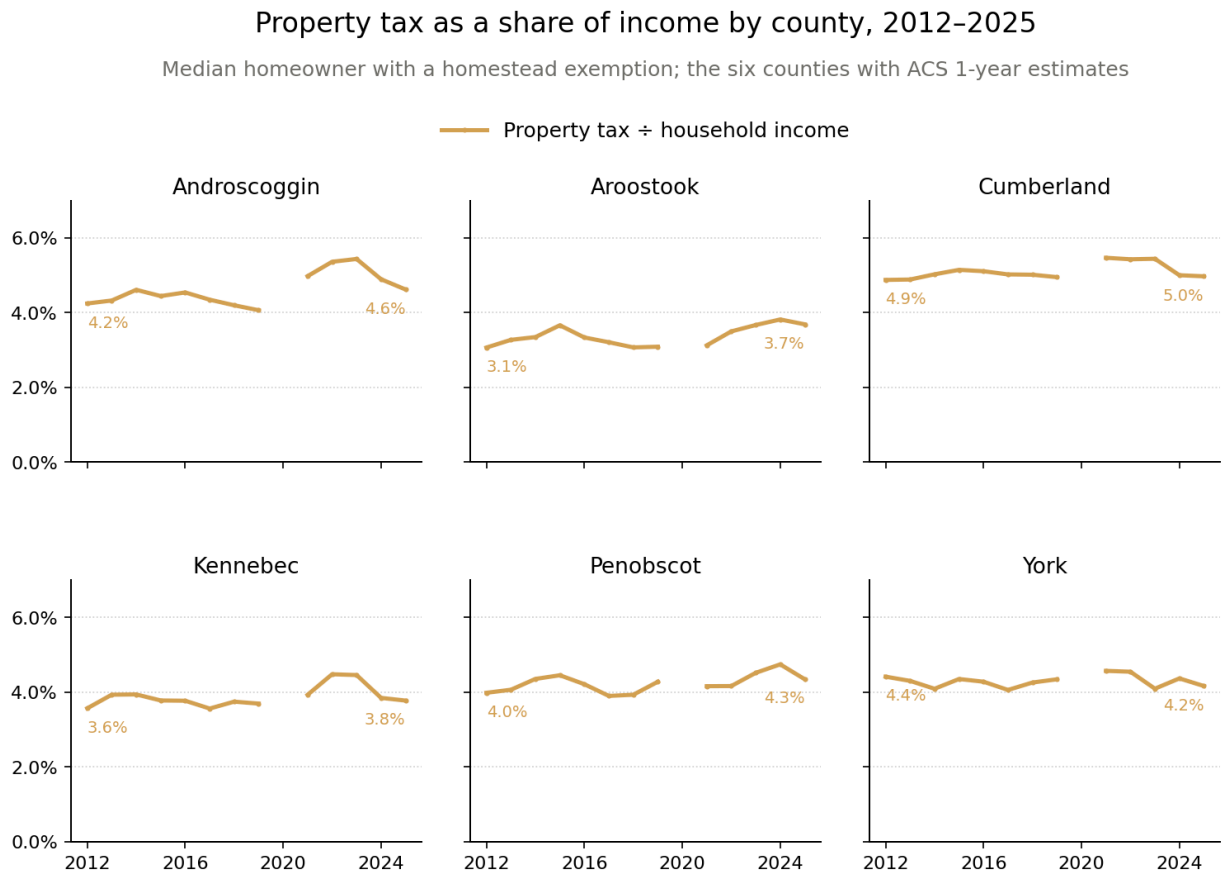


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ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

The fastest increases came in the north. In Aroostook, the typical homestead bill rose 70% after 2019, because home values rose sharply while its effective tax rate stayed relatively high. In Aroostook and Penobscot, the homestead bill is now above the average bill across all parcels, while in Cumberland and York it remains well below it, likely reflecting the southern coast's higher-value commercial, waterfront and second-home property.

Property Taxes as a Share of Income Over Time

Comparing property taxes to income, the counties have followed different paths since the pandemic. In Cumberland, York and Kennebec, the share of income going to property tax rose after 2019 but has since returned to its pre-pandemic level or slightly below. In Androscoggin, Penobscot and Aroostook it remains above it. The gap is largest in Aroostook: the typical homeowner there spent about 3.3% of income on property tax before the pandemic and about 3.7% in 2025, roughly $300 a year more at current incomes. Despite this increase, Aroostook homeowners still spend the smallest share of income on property tax of the six counties. Cumberland homeowners spend the largest share, at about 5%.



Tax = (ACS 1-year median owner-occupied value − homestead exemption in force that year) × effective tax rate.
Income = ACS 1-year median household income of owner-occupied households (B25119).
ACS 1-year estimates: none published for 2020 (due to covid).

Comparing tax bills with incomes since 2019 shows that the burden rose for different reasons in different places. In Aroostook, homeowner incomes grew strongly, by about 43%, but the typical homestead bill grew faster still, by about 70%, because the county's slower-growing tax base kept its effective rate high. In Androscoggin the problem was the reverse: bills grew at a moderate pace, but incomes grew by only about 21%, the slowest of the six counties. In the other four counties, bills and incomes grew at similar rates, leaving the burden roughly where it

stood in 2019, although in Penobscot that was already above its earlier average. County income estimates carry wide margins of error, so these comparisons are indicative rather than precise.

Taken together, the county results largely confirm the statewide picture. Everywhere, values rose sharply, effective tax rates fell, the commitment has outpaced costs since 2023, and tax bills have stepped up in dollar terms. The main regional difference is in the north. In Aroostook especially, a slower-growing tax base kept effective rates high, and the typical homeowner's tax bill and its share of income have risen more than elsewhere.

Key Findings

1. **Property values rose sharply after the pandemic and are now leveling off.** The value of the typical Maine home has nearly doubled since 2019 on most measures, but growth slowed sharply in 2025.

2. **Since 2023, the commitment has outpaced the cost of local government.** Before the pandemic, the commitment grew only slightly faster than costs. In the immediate post-pandemic years it rose with costs, as municipalities absorbed sharp increases in what they pay for staff, goods and services. Since 2023, it has continued to grow quickly while cost inflation has eased. The data show that this gap exists but cannot tell us why.

3. **Municipal budgets led the post-pandemic increase, and school spending has since caught up.** Offsetting revenues have covered a steady share of local budgets, so growth in appropriations has passed through to the property tax almost one-for-one.

4. **Spending growth was widespread rather than concentrated.** The great majority of municipalities increased their municipal budgets faster than costs, and growth varied little by town size or type.

5. **Rising values lowered tax rates rather than raising tax bills.** Because each municipality's mill rate is its commitment divided by its taxable value, rising values push rates down unless spending keeps pace. Values have risen far faster than the commitment since 2019, and the statewide effective property tax rate has fallen to 1.18%, its lowest level since at least 2012.

6. **Tax bills have risen substantially in dollar terms.** The typical homestead bill has risen much faster than consumer prices since 2012, with most of the increase coming after the pandemic.

7. **Measured against income, the burden has risen only modestly.** The share of income the typical homeowner spends on property tax rose after the pandemic, peaked in 2022, and has since eased as incomes grew faster than tax bills. It remains slightly above its pre-pandemic level of about 4%.

8. **The statewide pattern holds across the six largest counties, with Aroostook the main exception.** Everywhere, values rose sharply, effective tax rates fell, and the commitment outpaced costs after 2023. In Aroostook, a slower-growing tax base kept tax rates high, and homestead bills rose faster than incomes. Androscoggin's burden also rose, but because incomes grew slowly. Elsewhere, the share of income going to property tax is close to where it was before the pandemic.