



Understanding Millage Rates and Property Taxes in Dade County

TRENTON, Ga. (Aug. 15, 2025) — Every summer, Georgia counties, cities, and school boards go through a process that affects every property owner: setting the millage rate. While this is a routine part of local government budgeting, it can be confusing — especially when state law requires counties to advertise a “Property Tax Increase” even if the actual rate hasn’t gone up.

Here’s what that means for Dade County in 2025.

What is a Millage Rate?

A millage rate is the amount of tax per \$1,000 of a property’s assessed value — not its market value. In Georgia, the assessed value is set at 40% of the fair market value.

- Example: A home with a \$150,000 market value has an assessed value of \$60,000.
- If the millage rate is 8 mills (0.008), the county tax bill for that property would be \$480.

Why the State Requires Public Notices

Under Georgia law, counties must calculate a rollback rate each year. This is the millage rate that would generate the same amount of total property tax revenue as the previous year.

If the county adopts a millage rate higher than that rollback rate — even if it’s the same as last year — the state defines that as a “tax increase” and requires public hearings and newspaper notices.

How Growth Affects the Digest

The “digest” is the total taxable value of all property in the county. In 2025, Dade County’s digest grew due to:

- New rental properties
- New home construction
- Commercial development
- Increases in assessed value from property sales and market trends

Even without raising the millage rate, a larger digest generates more total revenue for the county. That’s why the law says this is a “tax increase” — the county is collecting more in total, even if many property owners’ bills don’t change significantly.

Dade County’s 2025 Millage Rates

For 2025, the Board of Commissioners has kept the same unincorporated millage rate as last year with a slight decrease in the incorporated rate.

- **Unincorporated Dade County:** 7.750 mills
- **Incorporated areas (City of Trenton):** 9.9502 mills

However, the rollback rates — the rates that would keep total property tax revenue flat — are lower:

- Rollback rate for unincorporated: **7.009 mills**
- Rollback rate for incorporated: **8.484 mills**

Compared to those rollback rates, the adopted rates represent:

- **10.57% increase** in the unincorporated area
- **17.28% increase** in the incorporated area

What This Means for Property Owners

A “tax increase” notice does not necessarily mean your personal tax bill will rise by that percentage.

- If your property value stayed the same, your taxes likely won’t change.
- If your property was reassessed upward, due to market trends, your bill may increase — but not because the millage rate went up.
- The overall increase reflects countywide growth, based on market trends, not just individual assessments.

Why This Matters

Property taxes fund essential county services, including:

- Sheriff’s Office and E911 services
- Road maintenance
- Fire protection and emergency response
- Courts and county administration
- Support for local schools (through separate school millage)

Dade County continues to have **one of the lowest median property tax rates in Georgia**, with an average effective rate of just 0.55% — far below the national average.

Your Chance to Weigh In

State law requires three public hearings before final adoption of the millage rate. The 2025 hearings are scheduled for:

- **Aug. 20, 2025** — 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- **Aug. 27, 2025** — 4:00 p.m., followed by a special called meeting at 4:30 p.m.

All hearings will be held at the Dade County Administrative Building, Commissioners’ Public Meeting Room, 71 Case Avenue, Trenton, Georgia.