

Early Property Tax Protests Prove Their Worth in Travis County

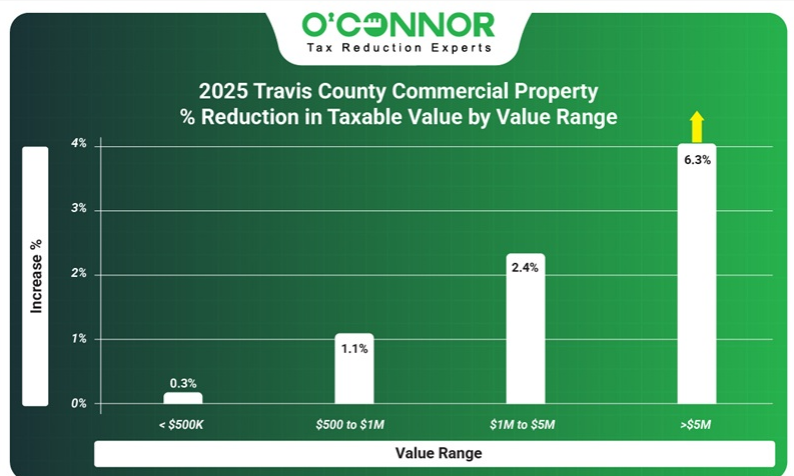
O'Connor discusses how the early property tax protests proved their worth in Travis County in 2025.

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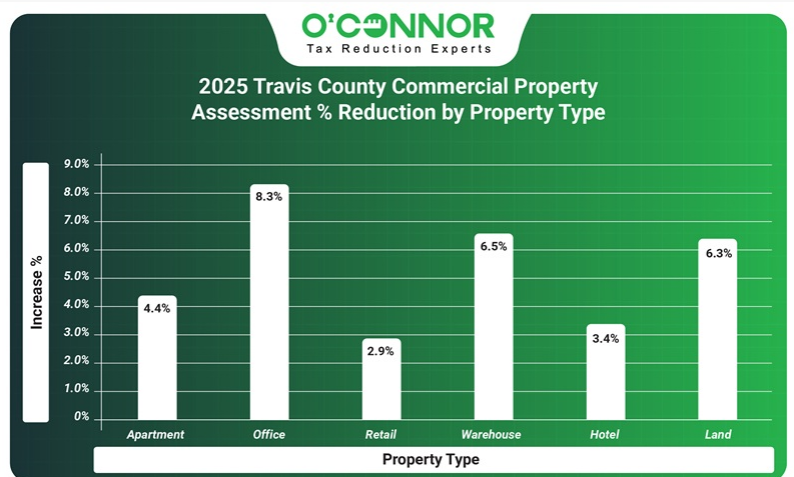
Travis County has some of the most expensive property in the entire United States. Austin is one of the hottest destinations in the world to live and work, and more Fortune 500 companies seem to be moving there every day. As a combination of Hollywood, Silicon Valley, and Nashville, Travis County looks to only grow larger in the coming years. But, while this fantastic growth has a lot of benefits, it does have some downsides.

Thanks to demand, the cost of both commercial property and homes has burst through the roof. Property values have increased over 300% in many areas, while going even higher in others. This could be either natural prices due to demand, or aggressive taxation by the Travis Central Appraisal District (TCAD). While homeowners were spared another giant increase in 2025, history indicates that things will soon start climbing again. The only

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2025 Travis County commercial property % reduction in taxable value by value range



2025 Travis County commercial property assessment % reduction by property type

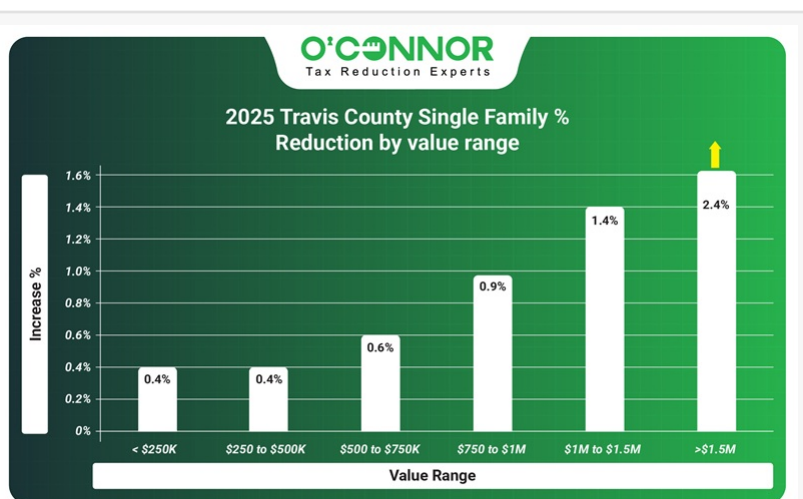
remedy that taxpayers have is to file property tax protests. Informal appeals have already come and gone in Travis County, but formal hearings before the appraisal review board (ARB) are still ongoing. The first round of appeals has impacted values across Travis County and they could affect things in the future.

Travis County Home Values Slashed 1.2%

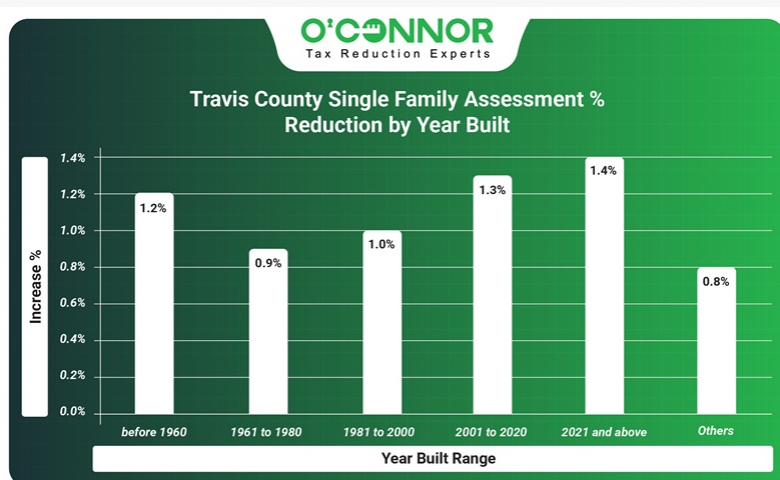
To the relief of homeowners across Travis County, residential property values were assessed at an increase of only 0.7% in 2025. After years of rapidly increasing taxes, this was something of a boon. It is still an increase; however, and Travis County property taxes are already beyond the means of many homeowners. TCAD initially valued homes at \$220.70 billion, but this was lowered to \$218.07 billion thanks to aggressive tax appeals. The largest decrease was for homes worth over \$1.5 million, which was a reduction of 2.4%, going from \$58.08 billion to \$56.69 billion. Homes worth between \$1 million and \$1.5 received a reduction of 1.4%, which translates to \$433.28 million in savings. 40.21% of all Travis County residential value now comes from homes worth over \$1 million.

When homes are looked at and broken down by their size, we can see just how valuable Travis County property has become. Homes under 2,000 square feet totaled \$69.16 billion before protests and were then reduced 0.7% to \$68.70 billion. Homes between 2,000 and 3,999 square feet made up the majority of value with \$108.09 assessed market value, before being reduced by 1.1% to \$106.91 billion. When compared to the table above, we see that even small homes in Travis County are pushing into the \$1 million range. This makes tax appeals even more important, as it allows longtime homeowners a chance to keep their properties.

Much of Texas experienced both a population and building boom from 2001 to 2020, and Travis County is one of the main reasons why. 40% of all residential property value was built during this



2025 Travis County single family % reduction by value range



Travis County single family assessment % reduction by year built

timeframe. This section of homes also received the largest benefit from early appeals, being reduced by 1.3% and going from \$87.70 billion to \$86.53 billion. Homes built between 1981 and 2000 were in the No. 2 spot and were cut down from \$58.01 billion to \$57.44 billion. After a 1.4% reduction, new construction ended up being valued at \$17.23 billion, or 8% of the total property value for Travis County.

Tax Protests Cut 2025 Commercial Value Hikes Almost in Half

While homeowners were spared from a giant value surge in 2025, the same cannot be said for commercial property owners. TCAD assessed commercial property at an increase of 14.7%, going to a total of \$160.73 billion. Thanks to diligent property owners and many appeals, this was reduced by 5.8% to \$150.85 billion. And this is before ARB hearings can come into any real effect. Most of the reductions came from businesses that were worth over \$5 million. These big properties saw their values cut by 6.3%, dropping from \$142.05 billion to \$133.11 billion. Commercial properties worth between \$1 million and \$5 million saw a reduction of 2.4% in their assessed value total.

Despite its exaggerated property values, Travis County follows the typical Texas model in a lot of ways. For instance, apartments are the No. 1 commercial property when it comes to value. Multifamily residences totaled \$61.91 billion, though they have since been lowered by 4.4% by tax appeals. Offices were easily in the No. 2 slot, with \$45.95 billion in value. Offices saw the largest boon from property tax protests, dropping 8.3% to \$42.12 billion. While apartments and offices are the primary reason for the huge value reversals seen in Travis County, warehouses and raw land achieved strong reductions of 6.5% and 6.3% respectively. Again, all these cuts are only with some property tax appeals applied, with more to come.

Like residential properties, much of Travis County's commercial value was created in recent boom periods. \$36.64 billion, or 23% of the total, was built between 1981 and 2000, while \$59.41 billion, or 37% of value, was constructed between 2001 and 2020. Thanks to property tax appeals, these were reduced to \$34.20 billion and \$56.40 billion respectively. New construction landed an impressive reduction of 8%, which translated into a savings of \$1.20 billion. New construction now accounts for 15% of all Travis County commercial value.

Commercial Appeals for Apartments Reduce Values by 4.4%

Of all the commercial properties that saw an increase in 2025, none were hit harder than apartments. TCAD handed out an assessed value increase of 15.6%, taking apartments from \$52.98 billion to \$61.91 billion. This was a crippling spike for both landlords and renters. Property tax appeals have so far found solid purchase, stymying this jump with a reduction of 4.4%. While a small victory, more is sure to come with ARB hearings in the future. Even though small, it still reduced the total value from \$61.91 billion to \$59.19 billion. The largest block of apartments, those built between 2001 and 2020, received a reduction of 3.3%, while new construction was reduced by 6.1%.

Despite their importance and value, apartments are only given two subtypes by TCAD. Apartments accounted for \$56.44 billion in value, before being protested down by 4.3%. Luxury high-rise apartments totaled \$5.46 billion before protests and \$5.17 billion afterwards.

Office Protests Counter 13% Hike with 8.3% Reduction

As the second-most valuable commercial property in Travis County, offices were burdened with an increase of 13% more taxable value in 2025. Offices went from a total value of \$40.35 billion to \$45.96 billion. Property owners immediately turned to property tax appeals to slow this down and achieved an impressive 8.3% reduction in the total. The total value of offices currently sits at \$42.12 billion, with ARB hearings waiting in the wings. Offices built between 2001 and 2020 accounted for 43% of all value, but we reduced 8%, a cut of \$1.58 billion. New construction went from \$2.85 billion to \$2.29 billion thanks to a giant reduction of 19.6%.

Office buildings get a better breakdown than apartments, with four subtypes that can be examined. Generic offices had the most value at \$31.97 billion, which was later reduced by 5.6%. High-rises received the largest reduction in pure percentage, going down 15.1%, or \$1.63 billion. Medical offices dropped from \$3.16 billion to \$2.75 billion thanks to a reduction of 13.1%.

Travis County Retail Receives Some Relief with Informal Appeals

While a 6.8% increase in value for retail properties is significant, it does seem smaller when compared to how other businesses were hit. Still, it was opposed strongly by property owners, who managed to get a reduction of 2.9%, which lowered the total value from \$8.25 billion to \$8.02 billion. New construction saw the biggest decrease in percentage with 6.7%, while those retail spaces built between 2001 and 2020 saved the most value with \$65.84 million. New construction had seen a 45.8% increase in taxable value, so the 6.7% cut was a welcome one.

TCAD splits retail spaces into four categories. The largest was strip centers, which were valued at \$4.72 billion, before getting reduced by 3% thanks to protests. Single-tenant retail saw the largest increase in value with 10.5% but was able to reel this back in with a 4% reduction, getting at least some relief. Community shopping centers had been hit with an increase of 7.3%, but this was likewise protested down by 4.1%.

Warehouse Protests Claw Back 6.5% of Value

TCAD splits warehouses into three subtypes, which allows a little exploration of how value was calculated. Warehouses initially accounted for \$12.61 billion, before being reduced by 6.2% to \$11.82 billion. Office warehouses were reduced by a whopping 10%, which brought in a value savings of \$286.66 billion. Thanks to a reduction of 3.4%, mini warehouses ended up with a total value of \$1.91 billion.

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Travis County in Conclusion

Travis County has been overvalued and unfairly taxed for so long that property tax appeals are commonplace. Over one-third of properties are protested every year, and this is only growing. As some of the most diligent taxpayers in Texas, the people of Travis County do not let TCAD boss them around. A 1.2% reduction for residential properties and a 5.8% reduction for commercial properties are both quite impressive. And this is just with informal appeals in the books. Travis County usually decides their property tax appeals at the ARB level, which tends to bring back even larger savings. These have only begun to be resolved, so much bigger cuts are set for the future.

It is important to file property tax appeals, not just for the individual taxpayer, but for an entire community. While many counties see less than 10% of properties protested, Travis has seen years around 38%. While property values are certainly high, they seem to be staying closer to actual market value, rather than being hopeful figments of TCAD's imagination. This is the power of annual protests.

O'Connor has been an advocate of annual protests across the country. They allow taxpayers to build a base of evidence and victories that can then be extended every year. Partner with us in Travis County, and we will help your property tax appeal at every step of the way, from basic informal appeals, to the ARB, to even lawsuits if that is required. It is free to sign up with us, and you will never be charged a dime unless you win.

About O'Connor:

O'Connor is one of the largest property tax consulting firms, representing 185,000 clients in 49 states and Canada, handling about 295,000 protests in 2024, with residential property tax reduction services in Texas, Illinois, Georgia, and New York. O'Connor's possesses the resources and market expertise in the areas of property tax, cost segregation, commercial and residential real estate appraisals. The firm was founded in 1974 and employs a team of 1,000 worldwide. O'Connor's core focus is enriching the lives of property owners through cost effective tax reduction.

Property owners interested in assistance appealing their assessment can enroll in O'Connor's Property Tax Protection Program [™]. There is no upfront fee, or any fee unless we reduce your property taxes, and easy online enrollment only takes 2 to 3 minutes.

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