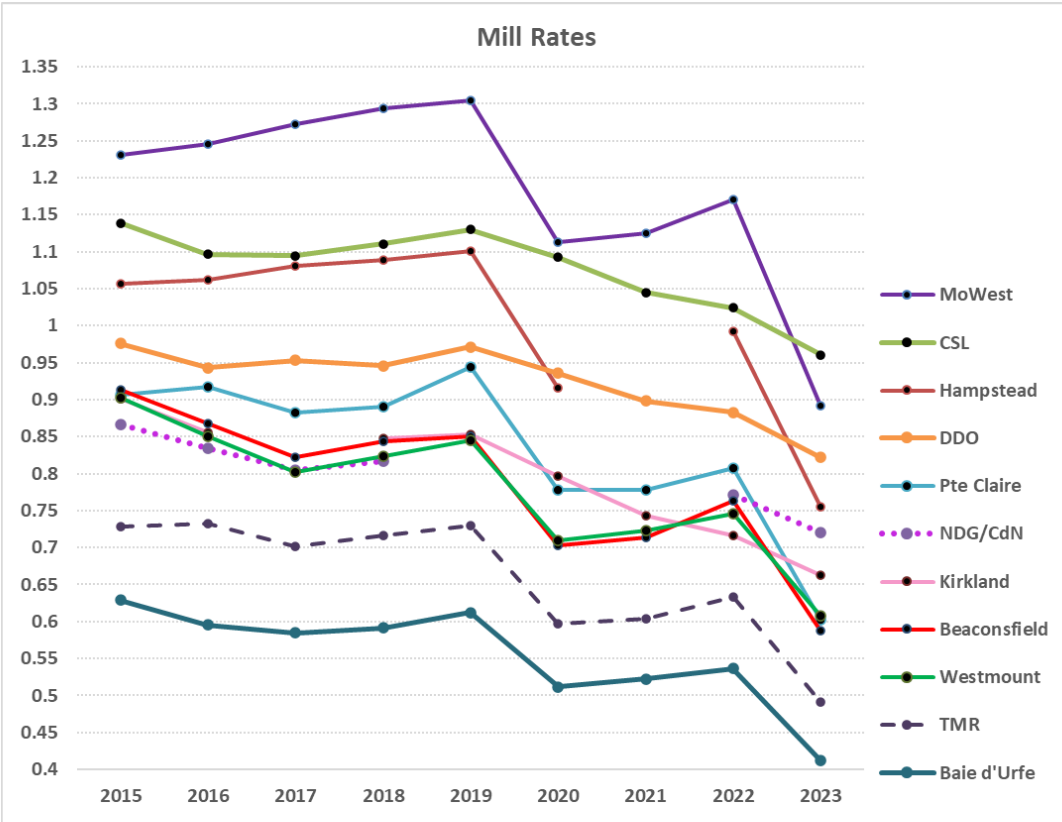
Mill rates naturally decrease if valuations increase more than a town's expenses.

The **mill rate** is essentially a town's expenses divided by its total property value, then multiplied by $100 to give the tax per $100 valuation that you see on your tax bill. If property values increase, as they recently did, and there's no increase in expenses, then the mill rate decreases proportionally and taxes will remain constant – provided your property experienced the average increase in valuation. (Imagine everyone's property valuations doubled, with constant Town expenses. The mill rate denominator would double, cutting the mill rate in half. Multiplying the half mill rate by the double property valuation gives the same taxes as the previous year.)



(There are a few gaps in years when I was distracted and didn't search out all the data.)

Why did MoWest temporarily lose its title as the highest taxed town on the Island?

From 2015 through 2022 MoWest was well above CSL except in 2020 when a new valuation role came into effect. In 2023 we lost our claim to the highest tax rates on the island, again as a new valuation role came into effect.

The reason that CSL took over worst position is that they phase their property valuations in over the 3 years that the role is applicable. Notice that 7 of the 10 towns (excluding NDG) exhibited sharp decreases in the mill rate from 2019 to 2020 when a new evaluation role came into force, and again from 2022 to 2023 with another new role.

But not to worry, we'll recapture first/worst position next year when CSL's valuations increase by another third increasing its mill rate denominator, and as our valuations remain constant. In 2024 we'll widen the gap with CSL as the last third of their evaluation increases kicks in knocking their mill rate down – unless they increase expenses substantially.

(To me, at least, spreading a valuation increase over 3 years – as apparently CSL, DDO, and Kirkland do, should not decrease the tax load. It seems to be a PR ploy. A town's expenses still need to be financed, so although their valuations will not increase as much as other towns', their mill rates will be higher than if they recognized the full valuation increase. However, this is my interpretation and I may be misunderstanding something.)

Arcane comments

At the largest recent gap with CSL in 2019, the MoWest mill rate was **1.3040**, or **15.4%** above CSL at **1.1298**. For every **$8,000** that CSL residents paid in taxes, a MoWest resident would have paid **$9,232**.

The narrowing of the gap between MoWest and CSL in 2020 was similarly due to our reporting the full valuation increase, while CSL only recognized one-third.

Earlier valuation roles only had modest increases in valuation, so no precipitous drops in mill rates are evident.

We had a large expense increase in 2022, 5.3%**, which led to a 4.23% increase in taxes, hence the sharper climb in our mill rate from 2021 to 2022.

** 2.6% local, 10.2% Agglo, but since local expenses were 62.53% of the budget and Agglo only 37.47% the overall expense increase was closer to 2.6% than to 10.2%.