REALTY **ONE** GROUP RESULTS

WILKESBORO · NORTH WILKESBORO · RONDA · HAYS · BOOMER · FALL 2026

Wilkes County *Leverage*

Prices up 12.6%. Inventory up 29.6%.
When both lines rise at once, one of them bends —
and buyers who are paying attention feel it first.

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THE HEADLINE

True, and still not *enough.*

Wilkes County's three-month trailing median through June 2026 was $317,604 — up 12.6% year over year. That is a real gain in a year when much of North Carolina ran flat, and it deserves a moment.

Two things it doesn't tell you.

First, the county figure gets pulled upward by higher-priced rural acreage and the W. Kerr Scott Lake corridor. In a county this size, a handful of closings moves the median noticeably. Small samples are honest and volatile at the same time.

Second, inventory is climbing faster than prices. Active listings are up nearly 30% year over year. When both lines rise together, one of them eventually bends — and buyers usually feel that before the headlines report it.

WILKES COUNTY, MID-2026	FIGURE	YEAR OVER YEAR
Median sale price, three-month trailing	$317,604	+12.6%
Active residential listings	606	+29.6%
Sale-to-list ratio	96.6%	Roughly flat
Median days on market	33 – 77 days	Varies by source
Months of supply, overall	About 5.7	Balanced

Figures come from several public sources that measure different things. Note that published supply estimates for small rural counties vary widely depending on which sales count is used — treat 5.7 months as one reasonable read, not a settled fact.

> *The county median is the number people quote at cocktail parties. Use it to pick your ZIP code, not your offer price. Every town in Wilkes has its own personality, and the number that matters is what similar homes on similar roads actually closed for in the last ninety days.*
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THE SPLIT

$275K	$286K	34.7%	96.6%
WILKESBORO 65 DAYS	NORTH WILKESBORO 59 DAYS	N. WILKESBORO LISTINGS TAKING A CUT	COUNTY SALE-TO-LIST

THREE TOWNS

Three different *markets.*

Look only at the county number and you'll overpay in one town while missing a real opportunity in another.

TOWN	MEDIAN	DAYS	THE READ
Wilkesboro — 28697	$275,000 sold	65	Balanced. Not a fire drill, not a fire sale.
North Wilkesboro — 28659	$286,000 sold	59	Cooling — 34.7% of listings have taken a cut
Ronda — 28670	$224,500 list	Varies	Rural. Comp-driven, small sample.
Hays — 28635	$275,000	60	Rural. Comp-driven.
Boomer, Moravian Falls, Purlear	$400K – $500K list	76 – 116	Acreage. Slow-moving by nature.

Note the mix: Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro figures are closed-sale medians; the rural towns show median list prices, which run differently. Comparing the two directly will mislead you.

North Wilkesboro is the one to watch

The median has held roughly flat while **more than a third of active listings have already taken a price reduction**, and days on market have risen sharply. That is the signature of a cooling market: prices holding on paper, time growing, and sellers quietly walking their asking prices down. Buyers here this fall have genuine leverage.

Is North Wilkesboro cheaper than Wilkesboro?

Depends entirely on the measure. On **closed sales**, North Wilkesboro's median runs slightly higher than Wilkesboro's. On **Zillow's modeled index**, it reads considerably lower — closer to $200,000.

Neither is wrong. A modeled index covers every home in the town, sold or not; a sale median covers only what actually closed. **For an offer, use closed comps in the specific ZIP.**

The rural towns work differently

Ronda, Boomer, Moravian Falls, and Purlear are largely acreage rather than town-lot inventory. Sample sizes are small enough that a single sale moves the number five percent. The right question isn't "what's the median" — it's **what did a comparable tract on a similar road close for in the last six months.**

WHERE LEVERAGE ACTUALLY LIVES

Pick your price band. The answer *changes.*

The county's 96.6% sale-to-list ratio hides the real story. That average blends competitive homes under $250,000 that still trade near asking with houses above $375,000 sitting past a hundred days and closing well under. The bands are where the decision actually gets made.

PRICE BAND	MONTHS OF SUPPLY	WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOUR OFFER
$225K – $250K	Balanced	Sellers still hold pricing power. Be ready to write.
$300K – $325K	About 2 months	The tightest band in the county. Genuine seller advantage — move fast and price fairly.
$375K – $400K	About 24 months	Deep buyer market. Write below list and ask for concessions.
County overall	About 5.7 months	Balanced on average — and the average describes almost nobody

READ THAT TABLE CAREFULLY

The leverage does **not** simply arrive above $300,000. The $300K–$325K band is the tightest in the county. The buyer's market begins in the upper bands — roughly above $325,000, and decisively by $375,000.
That distinction matters because the county median, $317,604, **sits inside the hottest band.** A buyer shopping at the median is competing. A buyer shopping $60,000 higher is negotiating.

> *If you can be flexible on price band and layout, this is a market to negotiate in. I have written offers on Wilkes County homes this summer that came in well under list and got accepted because the house had been sitting ninety days. That does not happen in Winston-Salem right now. It happens here.*
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Supply-by-band figures come from third-party absorption estimates and describe aggregates, not any specific listing. Confirm current inventory in your band before setting your posture.

THE LONG RUN

A four-year run, and what it *reset.*

INDICATOR	VALUE	SOURCE
FHFA House Price Index, 2021	150.66	FHFA via FRED
FHFA House Price Index, 2025	224.89	FHFA via FRED
Cumulative price gain, 2021 – 2025	+49.3%	Calculated
Median household income, 2024	$56,053	US Census via FRED
Price-to-income ratio	5.67×	Calculated
Documented for-sale housing gap	About 2,000 units	Wilkes EDC assessment

What a 49% run does to a negotiation

It resets expectations on both sides, in opposite directions. **Sellers remember the peak. Buyers remember pre-run prices.** Neither number is your comp, and a listing agent who hasn't had that conversation with their seller is why some of these homes are sitting.

The floor under this market

A documented shortage of roughly 2,000 for-sale units isn't a short-term fix. It keeps a demand floor beneath Wilkes County that many rural counties don't have. **Prices are not going to fall off a cliff here.**

But a demand floor and a price ceiling are different things. Listings priced above what the market is absorbing will keep taking cuts — which is exactly what the North Wilkesboro numbers show.

MerleFest and the Speedway change the comps

The festival and racing corridor carries its own premium in short-term-rental and cash-buyer pricing. If you're shopping near Wilkesboro or the Speedway, understand that a share of the comps you're looking at **sold to investors rather than owner-occupants** — and investor pricing behaves differently. Ask which is which before you anchor.

RURAL DILIGENCE

Well, septic, and the *road.*

A large share of Wilkes County homes sit on private well and septic, down private or shared roads. These three items are where rural purchases go wrong — and all three are answerable inside due diligence.

The well

Order a flow test measured in gallons per minute and a full water-quality panel — bacteria, nitrates, lead, and volatile organic compounds. A low-producing well isn't necessarily fatal, but it changes how you can use the property, and you want that answer before closing rather than during a dry September.

The septic

Inspect the tank and evaluate the drainfield, then ask the county what **bedroom capacity the system is actually permitted for.** That number governs what you can legally do with the house. Testing during due diligence is the difference between owning a home and inheriting a five-figure problem in year two.

The road

Three separate things, and you need all three confirmed in writing before you release earnest money:

- **Deeded, recorded legal access** — not "the family has always driven across the neighbor's place." Historical use is not an easement.
- **A recorded road maintenance agreement** if the road is private. Most lenders require one, and discovering its absence during underwriting can stop the loan.
- **Legal ingress and egress** confirmed by your closing attorney, in writing.

And budget the closing costs properly

Buyer costs in Wilkes typically run 2% to 3% of the purchase price — attorney fees, title insurance, recording fees, well and septic inspections, and a survey if the lender requires one. **North Carolina's excise tax of $1 per $500 of value is customarily paid by the seller**, not the buyer, so don't budget it on the wrong side. Ask for a written estimate before your due diligence period expires.

THE PLAYBOOK

Six moves for *fall.*

1 **Pick your lane before you pick your house**

A $250,000 primary buyer, a $350,000 acreage buyer, and a $500,000 lake or view buyer are in completely different markets right now — in the same county, in the same month.

2 **Get town-level closed comps, not county averages**

Actual closed sales from your ZIP over the last ninety days is the only number that belongs in an offer. Everything else is orientation.

3 **Use time as leverage above $325,000**

If a home has sat sixty-plus days in this county, the seller has already had the price-cut conversation with themselves. Your offer just gives them a reason to say yes.

4 **Never skip well and septic**

Flow test, water panel, tank inspection, drainfield, and permitted bedroom capacity. Every one of them, every time, on every rural property.

5 **Verify road access three ways**

Deeded access, recorded maintenance agreement, legal ingress and egress — confirmed by your closing attorney before earnest money is at risk.

6 **Write clean, and protect the right risks**

Speed helps in the tightest band. Everywhere else, protect your due diligence, your appraisal, and your financing. **This market is giving you room to be careful — use it.**

> *Wilkes rewards the buyer who does the homework, because most of what can go wrong here is discoverable before closing — and most of it is invisible from a listing photo.*
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Tell me your band, and what you're *trying to solve.*

Town or acreage. Primary, second home, or investment. Send the price band and what you actually want out of the property, and we'll pull the closed comps in your ZIP and build the offer around what the market is honestly doing this week — not what the county median says.

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