

WHEN AND WHAT ARE REASSESSMENTS OR GENERAL REASSESSMENTS?

A general reassessment is an annual revaluation of all real property within the City of Suffolk for the purpose of establishing market value and to ensure uniformity among property types and an equitable distribution of the tax burden to all property owners.

The most frequent cause of change in value results from a change in the market. By law, a general reassessment is conducted annually in the City of Suffolk with assessments effective as of July 1.

ASSESSMENT DATES AND SCHEDULES:

When an assessed value is changed for the upcoming fiscal year, the City Assessor's Office mails a proposed "Notice of Change in Assessed Value for Tax Year" form to the property owners in the first quarter of the year. If you have questions regarding the assessed value of your property, or if your opinion of the value of your property differs from the City's, you can appeal the value.



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UNDERSTANDING YOUR ASSESSMENT



The City Assessor is responsible for identifying and appraising all real property within the City. In order to accomplish this task, the Assessor supervises and directs a staff of appraisers and administrative support personnel.



Questions? Contact us at 757-514-7475, or visit us at Suffolk City Hall, 442 West Washington Street, Suite 1027

WHY ARE REAL ESTATE REASSESSMENTS IMPORTANT?

Real Estate Taxes are a major source of funding for local services, such as public education, fire and police protection.

WHY HAVE REASSESSMENTS?

Reassessments are required by law to ensure that each property is valued fairly and equitably. The Code of Virginia requires that all property is assessed at fair market value. Property taxes are calculated using the assessed value and the tax rate.

WHAT CAUSES ASSESSED VALUE TO CHANGE?

Generally speaking, improvements that increase the market value of a property will also increase the assessed value. The most frequent cause of change in assessed value results from a change in the market. When the market values change, so do the assessed values. A property value can also change for other reasons, such as additions, garages, remodeling, damage or destruction.

WHAT IS THE "FAIR MARKET VALUE"? (ALSO REFERRED TO AS "MARKET VALUE")

Fair market is defined as the amount a typical, well informed, purchaser would be willing to pay for a property, under the following conditions: The seller and buyer must be unrelated. The seller must be willing, but not under undue pressure to sell and the buyer must be willing, but not under any obligation to buy. The property must be on the market for a reasonable length of time. The payment must be in cash or its equivalent, and the financing, if required, must be typical for that type of property. If all of these conditions are present, this is considered a market value or "arm's length" sale.

INFORMAL HEARING:

The City Assessor's staff is available to provide you with answers concerning the appraisal process and your specific assessment. Informal Appeals may be filed with the City Assessor's Office. You may call or visit our office to discuss the assessed value of your property with an appraiser. They will provide an explanation of the reassessment process and information regarding your property and the surrounding assessment neighborhood. At that time you can also verify our records for correctness and request an inspection of the property. The City Assessor reviews Informal Appeals of Assessments. The Assessor's Office request to all property owners is to utilize the informal hearing process first. In most instances the issues can be resolved at this level.

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION:

The Board of Equalization is appointed by the Suffolk Circuit Court. Each board member is a property owner within the City and attends and participates in basic courses of instruction given by the Virginia Department of Taxation. The Board of Equalization will hear the appeal and determine if an adjustment is warranted. The application for a Board of Equalization hearing is mailed at the request of the property owner, is available online, or may be picked up from the City Assessor's Office. The City Assessor's Office provides administrative support to the Board of Equalization. If there is still a concern about the equity and/or fairness of the Assessment of your property, you may obtain an application for a Board of Equalization hearing.

CIRCUIT COURT:

Property owners dissatisfied with the Board of Equalization decision may file a petition with the Circuit Court. Property owners may file a petition to the Circuit Court without first making an Informal Appeal or Board of Equalization Appeal. The property owner will be bound by the rules of the Circuit Court in filing a petition.

TAX RELIEF:

Relief from Real Estate Taxes is offered through Tax Exemption by Classification, Tax Exemption by Designation, Land Use and Rehabilitated Real Estate. To see if you qualify for these programs, contact the City Assessor's Office at (757)514-7475. Information on the Tax Relief for the Elderly and Tax Exemption for Disabled Veterans or Surviving Spouse programs are available in the City Assessor's Office. These programs are administered by the Department of Social Services. For applications, call (757)514-4870.

SERVICES:

The establishment of the Office of the City Assessor was enabled by Section 82-401 and 82-488 of the Suffolk City Code. The City Assessor's Office is a team of real estate appraisers, real estate analysts, technology specialists and administrative specialists led by the City Assessor. The functions and responsibilities of the Assessor's Office include: making supplemental assessments for new construction, additions and improvements completed after July 1, providing for the review of assessments for equalization and fair market value through Informal Hearings and Board of Equalization Hearings, providing administrative support to the Board of Equalization, preparing the Land Book, Real Estate Assessment and updating property information such as transfer information and address changes, parcel creation and assisting property owners with their questions and concerns and administrating applications for tax exemption, tax abatements, and the tax credit program for rehabilitated structures.

