



County of Hamilton

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AUDITOR

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
138 EAST COURT STREET
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202

APPRECIATION FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Dusty Rhodes, Hamilton County Auditor

Thanks to everyone who participated in our informal review of the tentative new property values. We received approximately 15,000 responses and they will be helpful in checking our work.

The informal review opportunity is not required by law. I decided to do this when I was first elected to give owners a chance to participate in the value setting process. Over the years it has been very helpful in catching errors and inaccuracies that are bound to occur in a project of this size.

We are required by state law to set values to current market value. We do this in a mass appraisal which is less precise than a fee appraisal. The costs and the intrusive nature of actually trying to do a fee appraisal of every one of the 350,000 residential parcels in the county are obviously prohibitive.

One of the ways we determine value is by checking recent arms length sales of nearby comparable properties. That usually gives us a good indication of what a similar property would sell for in the open market. Our duty and our goal is to accurately report the market.

Reappraisals are not done to "raise taxes". We could not do so if that were our goal. Most voted levies are readjusted after a reappraisal so that taxing entities (schools, local governments, etc.) get no more money than voters approved.

The reason for the reappraisals every three years is to rebalance values to conform to the market. Huge inequities exist in jurisdictions that fail to do reappraisals on a regular basis.

We plan to notify everyone who responded to their tentative valuation with their final value in December. If you disagree with our decision you have the right to formally challenge the final value through the Board of Revision (BOR).

A big frustration for many property owners is how to contest what they see as an inaccurate value. My first suggestion is to contact a realtor who is active in your neighborhood and ask their opinion. That gives you an independent idea of your value. You may also hire an appraiser.

If you go to the BOR it is up to you to make the case for your opinion of your property's worth. You cannot say "my value is wrong so fix it" or worse yet, "my taxes are too high". You have to have evidence to support your value opinion. The best evidence is recent arms length sales in your neighborhood. Here is where a realtor can also be helpful. They can get you that information or you can research it yourself on our website, www.hamiltoncountyauditor.org

Should there be property damage that you believe affects your value it will be helpful to submit photos and estimates from contractors as to the cost of the remedy.

A formal challenge can only be made to the BOR between January 1 and March 31 of any one year in the three year reappraisal period. Instructions and complaint forms are available on our website after January 1 or we will be glad to send them to you by mail after that date.

It may seem as though the process is somewhat complicated but we have to follow the law. Those laws were written to assure an open and fair hearing. For our part we strive to make it as easy as we can to submit a value challenge. If you don't understand something, please ask. My staff and I are always ready to answer your questions.

Our office's main phone number is 513-946-4000. My e-mail is dusty.rhodes@fuse.net.

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