

REQUESTS FOR REVIEW OF PROPERTY VALUES

Property owners often feel that the real market value assigned by the county assessor is too high. While we strive to accurately appraise every piece of property, with over 28,000 property tax accounts in Columbia County there are bound to be mistakes made. That is why we always try to respond quickly and thoroughly to requests from property owners to review the real market value of their property.

Oregon has a very complex property tax system. While some properties may be assessed taxes on their real market value, other properties are assessed on their maximum assessed value. All properties maintain both of these values, however, the value taxes are assessed on is the lower of the two. Maximum assessed value was initially determined for existing properties in 1997 as the 1995 value less ten percent. New properties or new improvements to an existing property have a maximum assessed value calculated based on a percentage of their real market value. Once maximum assessed value is established for a property, there is no longer a connection to the two values. Real market value will increase or decrease annually based on market trends and can be adjusted based on a review or appeal while maximum assessed value is limited to a 3% increase annually and cannot be changed. Even if your real market value is lowered based on a review or appeal, if your maximum assessed value is still lower than the real market value, the total tax due will not change.

While we attempt to respond quickly and thoroughly to requests from property owners to review the real market value of their property, limited staff and resources makes it difficult to be as thorough as we would like. Therefore the following steps are being implemented to review the value of your property:

1. You will be asked to fill out a Request for Property Value Review form indicating clearly why you think our market value is too high and what you think the market value should be. If you have documentation and/or pictures that support your argument, please attach them.
2. If the reduction in market value will be less than 5%, no review will be conducted. Real estate appraisal is only accurate to plus or minus 5%.
3. If your estimate of the market value would not reduce the assessed value, a review will be conducted for the following tax year and will be conducted some time after the first of the year. You will likely receive a letter letting you know we have delayed our review, however, you will not be notified of the results during the next year.
4. If your estimate of the market value is lower than the assessed value or if you disagree with the real market value assigned to an exception, a review will be conducted for the current year and will be completed in late November. In most cases the review will be based on the information that you have provided. If the appraiser needs additional information they may call you to schedule an interior inspection. You will be notified of the results of our review by December 15.

If you are dissatisfied with the results of our review you may file an appeal with the Columbia County Board of Property Tax Appeals. Appeal forms are available from our office or the County Clerk and must be filed with the County Clerk no later than December 31.