

CITY OF VERGENNES, VT 2025 REAPPRAISAL

Why is a reappraisal required?

The Vermont Tax Department requires a town-wide reappraisal when property assessments are no longer equitable based on a three year study of sale data. Property values change over time and it is important that each property owner has a fair assessment for taxation purposes.

How often is a reappraisal performed?

It depends on the behavior of the local market but usually every 10 years or so. Markets and property specifics change over time so a reappraisal brings every property in-line with similar properties in the neighborhood.

What does a reappraisal encompass?

A reappraisal includes the physical inspection of each property to record property components. Recent sale data is reviewed and land and improvement costs are derived from the market. Primary value predictors include: location, lot size, gross area of the dwelling, quality and condition of the dwelling and the value of amenities. The new assessment should be at fair market value defined as: the actual value at which a willing buyer and willing seller will consummate a sale with all factors to the sale disclosed with neither party under compulsion to buy or sell.

What is the schedule of the reappraisal?

Inspections will begin in 2024 with owners notified of when their neighborhood will be inspected. The initial new assessed value will be available on line for review by the property owner. The reappraisal will be completed in the spring of 2025.

Do I have to let the data collector on my property?

No, you can deny entry but the data collector will record your property using exterior estimation and take photos from the street.

Will my taxes change as a result of reappraisal?

It depends. The grand list will increase and the tax rate will decrease after reappraisal. The reappraisal is intended to make individual assessments more accurate due to changes in the physical attributes of a property and to changes in the local real estate market. Of course, increases in municipal and education taxes will affect everyone equally.

Can I appeal my new tax assessment?

Yes, first there will be pre-grievance hearings to address simple questions and correct errors. Formal grievances will be held thereafter and will be heard by the appraisers and listers by appointment. Further appeals go before the Vergennes Board of Civil Authority and by law an interior inspection of your property is required.

2.

How do I grieve my new assessed value?

The courts have held that the town's value has a "presumption of validity". The property owners must present evidence that overcomes this and offer a valid argument that supports a lower estimate of market value, such as a recent appraisal or information that was not evident at the time of inspection.

Why do property values change over time?

Usually two reasons: changes in the local real estate market and changes to the property. In the last four years, property values have increased dramatically due to low interest rates and COVID 19. The new assessed values will reflect these increases. In addition, changes to a property, both positive and negative will reflect a more appropriate assessed value.

When will I know what the change in my tax bill is and when it is due?

Once the grievance hearings are completed the total value of all the real estate in Vergennes will be totaled to create the Grand List. Shortly thereafter, the municipal and school budget expenses are calculated and divided by the grand list to indicate a tax rate for that year. New tax bills will be created and mailed to each property owner. Vergennes taxes are due quarterly with the first payment due on August 15 of the fiscal year.

Are there other ways that I can reduce my taxes?

Vermont has a program that will offer property tax relief based on income sensitivity. Depending on your qualified income, either your entire tax bill or the education portion of your tax bill may be reduced. You should talk to your tax advisor or visit the Vermont Tax Department website for more details.

Prepared by William Benton
Benton Real Estate Appraisers
All rights reserved

