

Inclusion through Diversity

Department of Assessment

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Staff—10 Full time Equivalents

Tax Parcels—34,571

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Assistant Director—Irene Kehoe
Senior Valuation Specialist—Al Fiorille
Valuation Specialists
 Kathy King
 Michael Xayarath
 Gary Bortz
Support Staff
 Tamara VanOrman
 Jaycee Becker
 Barbara Just
 Sarah Delmage
GIS Technician
 Victoria Wagner

Sales History of Residential Properties

Year	Average	Median
2000	\$120,075	\$99,500
2001	\$126,361	\$107,610
2002	\$135,778	\$119,425
2003	\$158,136	\$132,000
2004	\$179,904	\$142,000
2005	\$173,591	\$150,000
2006	\$197,016	\$169,000
2007	\$205,282	\$182,000
2008	\$208,578	\$194,000
2009	\$196,332	\$173,000
2010	\$213,417	\$172,500
2011	\$206,414	\$174,000

The Department of Assessment in Numbers

Mission Statement

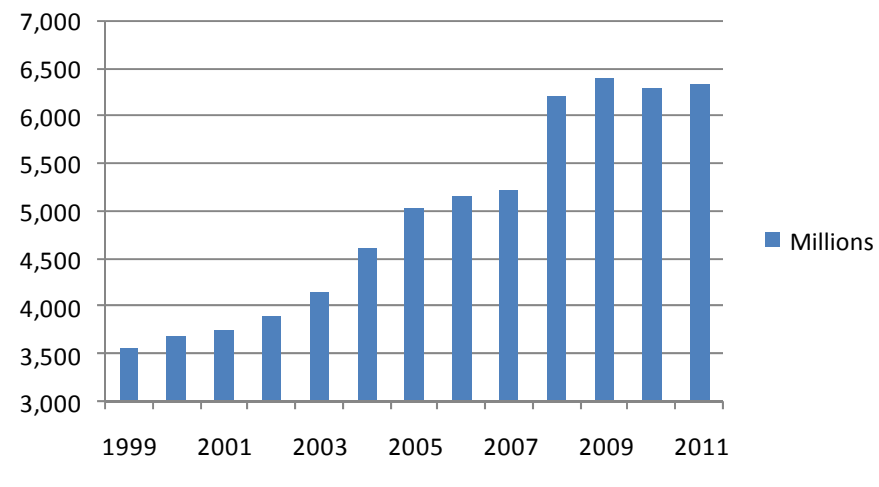
The mission of the Tom-pkins County Department of Assessment is:

- **Assess** properties at uniform percentage of fair market value, yearly,
- **Administer** real property tax exemptions as provided by law,
- **Educate** the general public about real property assessment administration.

Real Property Exemptions:

5,763—Yearly Exemption Applications 25,262—Total Exemptions in County

Tompkins County Taxable Value



Drop in taxable value in 2010 was due to AES Cayuga's shift to exempt portion of the roll due to the PILOT agreement and separate billing.

2012 Preliminary Assessment Roll

Assessment Equity Statistics

Sales From July 1, 2010 to July 1, 2011

Assessment Ratio = 0.99 (assessment/sale price).

This indicates that properties are under-assessed by 1% (or effectively at 100% FMV)

Price Related Differential = 1.01

This indicates that all properties regardless of price range are assessed equitably.

Coefficient of Dispersion = 4%

On average, the assessed value is 4% off of actual selling price.

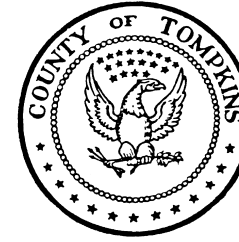
Changes in Assessment

Increases = 2,631

Decreases = 994

Change in Assessed Value = \$229,328,401

(Physical Increase = \$61,556,422)



Inclusion through Diversity

Special points of interest:

- 2012 Preliminary Assessment Roll Filed.
- March 30 deadline to file informal assessment review.
- 14th consecutive year for reappraisal.
- Received over \$1.2 million in state aid for equity assessments over the last 10 years.
- Reducing staffing levels from 19.5 in 2000 to 10 in 2012. (3.5 fewer than the staffing levels in 1970)

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Tompkins County Department of Assessment

128 E Buffalo St Ithaca NY 14850 (607-274-5517)

Department of Assessment Files 2012 Preliminary Assessment Roll

Our 43rd Consolidated Assessment Roll

On March 9, the Department of Assessment filed the 2012 Preliminary Assessment Roll. This preliminary assessment roll reflects 100% fair market value as of July 1, 2011 for all 34,000+ parcels in the county.

While the real estate market in Tom-pkins County has remained relatively stable, some areas of the county will experience a change in their assessment. Goodrich Way and Eagles Head Rd in the Town of Dryden will experience a decrease in their assessment while South Hill in the City of Ithaca, will have an increase in their assessed values.

We also reviewed the small apartments in the county and they will receive a uniform percentage in-

crease based upon their valuation district.

Beginning March 9th, the Department of Assessment will begin taking phone calls for informal assessment review meetings that will take place from March 19—



March 26 for all property owner's whose value has changed since the 2011 Final Assessment Roll.

These informal assessment review meetings are strictly for individuals whose value has changed. However all property owners may either file an informal assessment appeal on-line or through the mail.

The Department of Assessment encourages all property owners to review the 2012 Preliminary Assessment Roll, including the inventory on their property.

After all informal assessment reviews are completed, the Department of Assessment will file the 2012 Tentative Assessment Roll on May 1. At this point in time, all complaints must be formally filed with the Tom-pkins County Board of Assessment review from May 1—May 22th at 8:00 PM.

This is the 14th consecutive year that the Department of Assessment has performed an reappraisal of real property in the county thereby ensuring an equitable distribution of the tax burden.

Review of Wholly Exempt Properties

The Tom-pkins County Department of Assessment sent out 317 letters to wholly exempt properties confirming that the use of their property is consistent with the provisions of the Real Property Tax Law.

Based upon this review, \$2,173,000 in taxable value was added back onto the assessment as the current use of those prop-

erties no longer make them eligible for the not-for-profit property tax exemption.

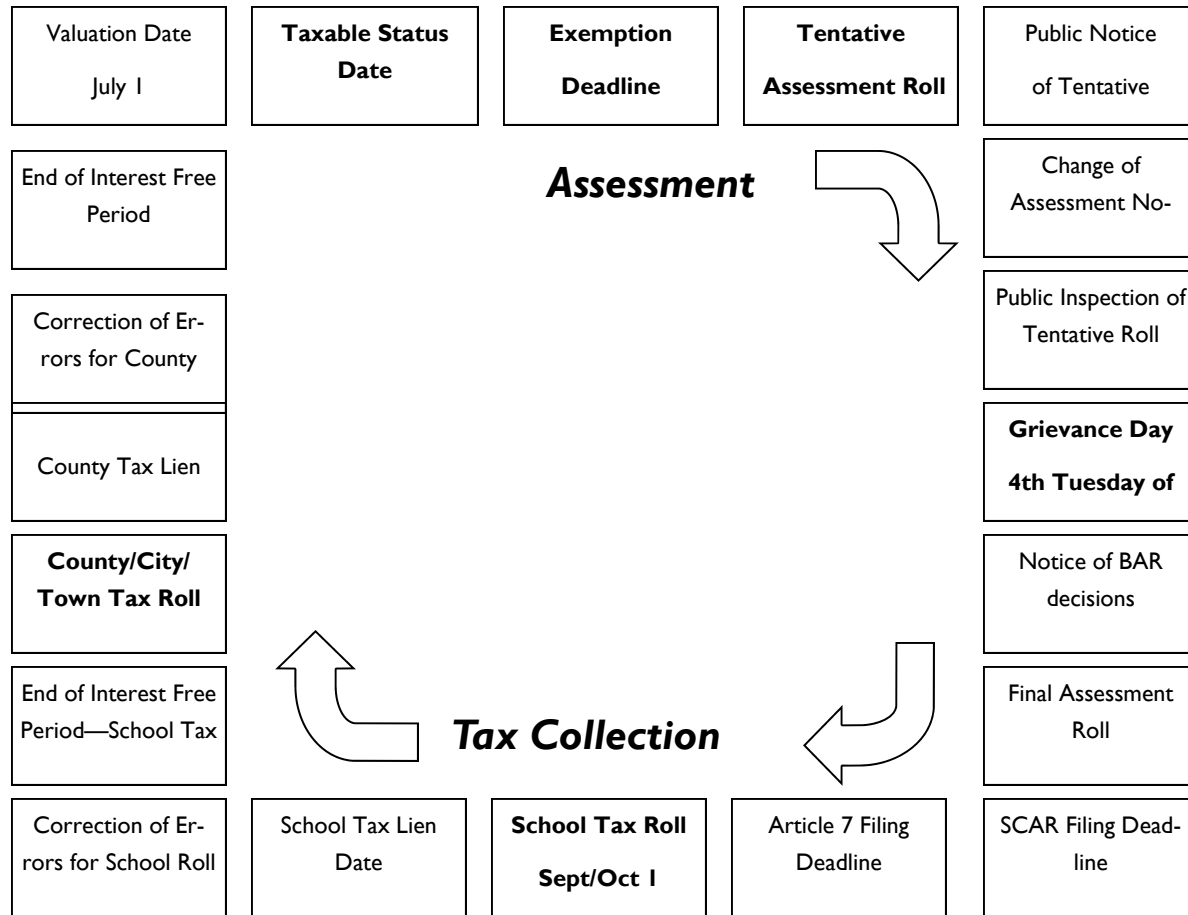
Additionally, we have just started our yearly task of reviewing all of Cornell University's holdings to confirm that the use of their property would still make it eligible for the education aspect of the not-for-profit exemption. This is also being done with Ithaca College.

Finally, we are currently in the process of reviewing multiple properties that are held by local municipalities, including Tom-pkins County, to confirm that these properties are held for the public good. If they are found to be not held for the public good, then these properties will become taxable on the 2012 Assessment Roll.

THE PROPERTY TAX CYCLE

It is every property owner's responsibility to know the important dates in the property tax cycle. If a property owner does not receive a tax bill, they are still responsible to pay the taxes due on time. Failure to either mail or receive a tax bill **does not** negate the taxes due on the property.

It is also suggested that every property owner verify their tentative assessment each year after the Tentative Assessment Roll is filed. Again, failure to mail or receive a Change in Assessment Notice **does not** negate the assessed value.



KEY DATE DEFINITIONS:

- Valuation Date:** Real property price level for the assessment cycle is frozen as of this date. (July 1)
- Taxable Status/Exemption Filing Date:** The ownership and physical condition of real property as of this date are assessed (valued) according to price fixed as of the valuation date. All applications for property exemptions must be filed with assessor by this date. (March 1)
- Tentative Assessment Roll:** The assessor completes, certifies and files a roll containing proposed assessed values for each property in the assessing unit. (May 1)
- Grievance Day:** Board of Assessment Review meets to hear assessment complaints. Last day property owners may file a formal complaint seeking reduction in their tentative assessments. (4th Tuesday of May)
- Final Assessment Roll:** The assessor signs and files a roll that contains the final assessments, including all changes. (July 1)
- School Tax Lien Date:** The date school authorities attach to the school tax roll an authorization for collection of taxes.
- County/City/Town Tax Lien Date:** The date county/city/town authorities attach to the county/city/town tax roll an authorization for collection of taxes. Tax collector publishes notice of tax collection. (Jan 1)
- End of Interest-Free Period County/City/Town Tax:** County/city/town taxes may be paid without interest or penalty fees for one month after publication of a notice of collection. (Jan 31)

The Six Year Continual Equity Maintenance Plan

In 2008, the Tompkins County Department of Assessment entered into its second 6 year maintenance plan with the New York State Office of Real Property Tax Services (ORPS). The ORPS has subsequently changed the maintenance aid program to one that would cost the county a significant amount of money to participate in while not providing for a more equitable assessment roll.

Part of the 6-year plan is to data collect all property in the county

from the public right of way. For 2012, the Department of Assessment collected the majority of the City of Ithaca, the Village of Freeville, Town/Village of Groton and the Village of Trumansburg/Town of Ulysses from the public right of way. With the exception of the rest of the City of Ithaca, this completes the data collection aspect of the 6-year plan.

As we begin to prepare for the 2013 Assessment Roll, we are planning to review the values of all

of the land within the county. The last time this was completely done was for the 2008 Revaluation. Sales have shown that the values that are on land in the county to be significantly below their market value, most notably for active agricultural land.

Additionally, we will be reviewing the large scale apartment complexes as these types of properties continue to be a very desirable investment.



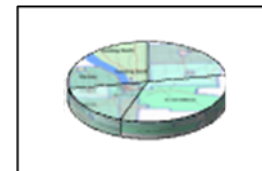
Only true county-wide assessing unit in New York State. Consolidated in 1970

The Role of Real Property Administration

Government uses real property assessment as a tool to distribute the local property tax in a fair and equitable manner. If you think of the total amount of taxes

the function of assessment is not to determine the size of the pie, but to ensure that the pie is cut up fairly, based upon current market values.

impartial manner. As required by New York State law, properties are reassessed at a uniform percentage of fair market value each year.



collected by a jurisdiction as a pie,

The real property tax is an *ad valorem* tax (Latin for "according to value"). To ensure the equity in the distribution of the real property tax, the fair market value of all real property in the county is determined in a professional and

Fair market value is defined as the most probable selling price a property would bring on the open market. Fair market value is not the highest price a property might sell for, but is the most probable selling price.

"The Assessor is not involved in the levy, extension, collection or enforcement of local real property taxes."

Gas Drilling and Real Property Taxation

The Department of Assessment has been meticulously reviewing the possible impact of potential high-volume horizontal gas drilling on property values within Tompkins County.

At this point in time, we have not been able to determine any possible effect on value, positive or negative, to any property class in any part of the county.

We will continue to monitor this possible effect on value as the possible moratorium on gas drilling might be lifted by the Department of Environmental Conservation by the end of 2012.

Even though towns within Tompkins County have banned drilling within their borders, the fact that drilling might occur in neighboring communities could possibly have

an effect on property values within the county.

The Department of Assessment is also monitoring the effect that gas leases have on the ability of the potential buyer to obtain mortgage financing and title insurance. As more is known about gas drilling, these two essential pieces of purchasing property might become harder to obtain.



According to a 2008 Study, the Department of Assessment saves the county taxpayers over \$300,000 as compared to the local town assessment structure.