



BUNCOMBE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

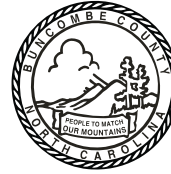
CITIZEN REAPPRAISAL GUIDE

2021

“I have to see a thing
a thousand times
before I see it once.”

Thomas Wolfe, You Can't Go Home Again





2021 **CITIZEN REAPPRAISAL GUIDE**

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SCHEDULE OF **REAPPRAISAL** ACTIVITY*

APRIL 2019-DECEMBER 2020

Some door-to-door visits by Buncombe County Assessment staff

JANUARY 1, 2021

Effective date for 2021 Reappraisal

JANUARY 30, 2021

Notice of assessed value mailed to property owners

JANUARY-APRIL 2021

Property owners may appeal the 2021 assessed value

APRIL 14, 2021

Board of Equalization and Review will convene for the hearing of 2021 timely filed appeals

APRIL 21, 2021

Board of Equalization and Review will adjourn and close the appeal period for 2021

JUNE 30, 2021

FY2022 Tax rate established by the Board of Commissioners

AUGUST 2021

Collector will mail tax notice to property owners

**Dates included in schedule of activity are subject to change.*

CITIZENS REAPPRAISAL

Dear Buncombe County Citizens,
North Carolina law, NCGS 105-286, specifically requires counties to reappraise all real property at least once every eight years. Real Property is considered land, buildings, structures, and improvements. NCGS 105-286 also authorizes counties to reappraise real property more frequently than every eight years. In order to maintain current values, Buncombe County attempts to reappraise all real property on a four year schedule. The previous reappraisal occurred in 2017 with the next reappraisal effective January 1, 2021.

North Carolina law, NCGS 105-283, requires that real property be valued at its true value in money, meaning market value. Properties are appraised at 100% of market value based on the most recent qualified sales that occurred leading up to the reappraisal date. Not all properties will sell, rent, or be built in the same time frame, but those properties that do can be used to establish typical market rates for those activities. Buncombe County consists of approximately 129,000 parcels of real property. In order to reappraise all parcels a process referred to as mass appraisal is employed. Mass appraisal is the process of grouping uniform or similar properties together to ensure fair and equitable property values. Various characteristics of the property are considered during the appraisal process such as, location, type of construction, age, replacement cost, various forms of depreciation, zoning, etc.

Property values can change during a non-reappraisal year due to physical changes that are made to the property. Reappraisal value is the value of the property as of January 1 of the reappraisal year. Buildings or other improvements currently under construction are appraised according to the degree of completion on January 1.

For most, the property is assessed for taxation at market value. The assessed value of a property may be different from the appraised value because the property could be enrolled in a tax relief program.





Town Mountain View
Asheville, North Carolina

NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES

NCGS 105-286(A).

Time for general reappraisal of real property.

“Each county must reappraise all real property in accordance with the provisions of G.S. §105-283 and G.S. §105-317 as of January 1... and every eighth year thereafter, unless the county... chooses to advance the date.”

NCGS 105-283.

Uniform appraisal standards.

“All property, real and personal, shall as far as practicable be appraised or valued at its true value in money. When used in this subchapter, the words true value shall be interpreted as meaning market value, that is, the price estimated in terms of money at which the property would change hands between a willing and financially able buyer and a willing seller, neither being under any compulsion to buy or to sell and both having reasonable knowledge of all the uses to which the property is adapted and for which it is capable of being used.”



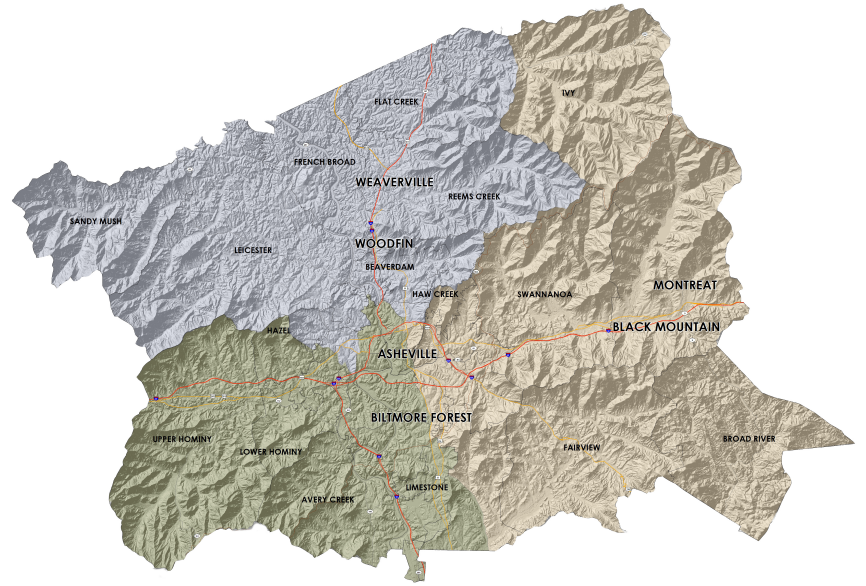
BUNCOMBE COUNTY ELECTED OFFICIALS BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

The Buncombe County Commissioners' offices are located at 200 College St., Suite 300 in downtown Asheville. Their meetings are held at 200 College St., Suite 326.

 DISTRICT 1

 DISTRICT 2

 DISTRICT 3



MIKE FRYAR

JOE BELCHER

AMANDA EDWARDS

BROWNIE NEWMAN
COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

JASMINE BEACH-FERRARA

ROBERT PRESSLEY
VICE CHAIRMAN

AL WHITESIDES



Blue Ridge Sunset

PROPERTY **TAX** FACTS

Real property is appraised at 100% of fair market value. In North Carolina, property tax is a significant source of revenue for local government entities. In 2020, property tax represented nearly two-thirds or 61.6% of Buncombe County revenues.

Buncombe County does not keep all property tax dollars collected. To streamline billing and collection processes, Buncombe County bills and collects property taxes on behalf of Asheville City Schools, City of Asheville, Town of Black Mountain, Town of Montreat, and Town of Woodfin, in addition to all fire districts within Buncombe County. As taxes are collected, the County disperses tax funds to respective taxing entities. For most property owners, this process results in one tax bill each year instead of multiple tax bills for individual properties. Each taxing entity determines their own budget and tax rate.

Buncombe County does not collect for all municipalities. The Town of Weaverville and the Town of Biltmore Forest bill and collect taxes on behalf of their citizens. Taxpayers who own property in these two municipalities will receive two separate tax bills.

Due to the combination of multiple taxing entities on a property owner's bill, the tax liability is a combination of tax rates for each applicable entity. For example, a property located within the City of Asheville and Asheville City School districts will have three separate tax rates represented on a bill; Buncombe County, City of Asheville, and Asheville City School rates. All rates will be totaled to calculate tax due.



*Buncombe County Courthouse
Downtown, Asheville*

PROPERTY TAX KEYPOINTS

An increase or decrease in the appraised value of a property does not alone predict whether the property tax will increase, decrease, or remain the same.

Only after the tax rates are set, just prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, can the property tax be determined.

Calculating property tax will vary slightly depending on the municipality and/or fire district in which a property resides.

Following is a calculation example:

Example based on 2019 tax rate.

Property Value = **275,000**

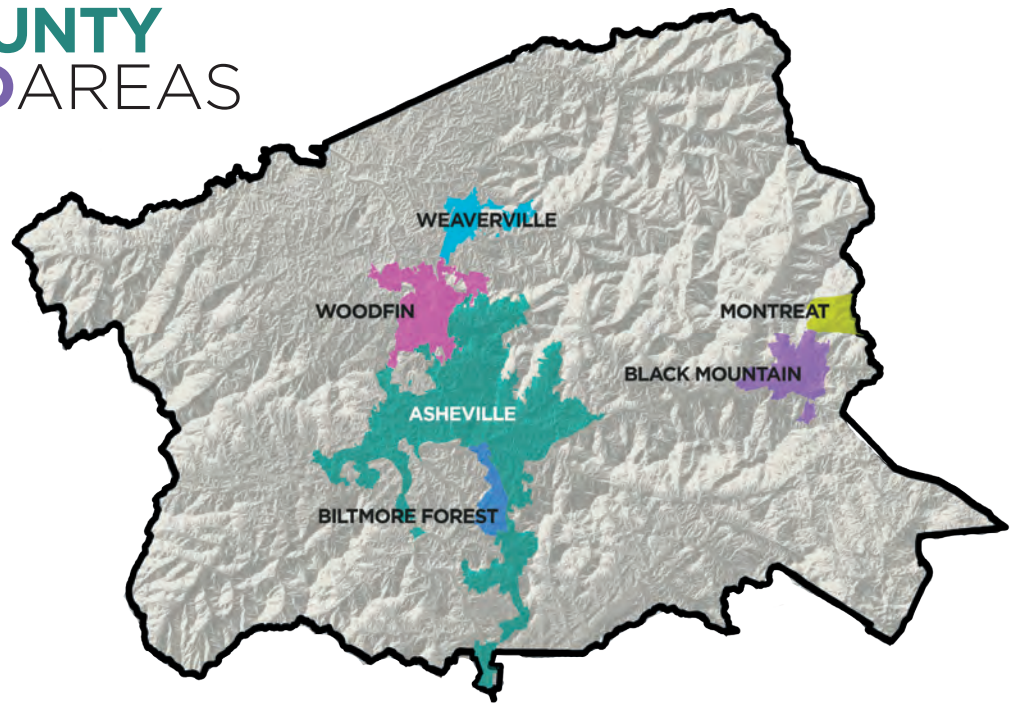
Property located within the *City of Asheville*, serviced by the *City of Asheville Fire Department* and within the *City School District*.

Total tax rate:	County	0.5290%
	City of Asheville	0.4289%
	Asheville School	0.1200%
	Total tax rate	1.0779%

Total tax due = $(1.0779/100) \times (\$275,000) =$ **\$2,964**

BUNCOMBE COUNTY INCORPORATED AREAS

Within Buncombe County are six incorporated areas or municipalities. They are: City of Asheville, Town of Biltmore Forest, Town of Black Mountain, Town of Montreat, Town of Weaverville, and Town of Woodfin. Buncombe County is responsible for property value assessments within each incorporated area.



BUNCOMBE COUNTY FIRE DISTRICTS

Within Buncombe County are 20 major fire service district areas; some are broken into smaller fire protection service districts. Buncombe County collects real property taxes for each fire district and passes the revenue to them on a monthly basis.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Asheville Special | Leicester |
| Asheville Suburban | North Buncombe |
| Barnardsville | Reems Creek |
| Broad River | Reynolds |
| East Buncombe | Riceville |
| Enka-Candler | Skyland |
| Fairview | Swannanoa |
| French Broad | Upper Hominy |
| Garren Creek | West Buncombe |
| Jupiter | Woodfin |



APPRAISAL/ ASSESSMENT APPEAL PROCESS



No matter how thorough and fair a reappraisal may be, there are still instances when only the property owner has all the information necessary for an accurate appraisal. A relatively easy appeal process is in place to rectify such a situation. According to North Carolina General Statute, the property owner has the burden of proving the property under appeal is incorrectly valued. North Carolina law presumes the County Tax Assessor acted in good faith and their assessments are correct.

The first step in the appeal process is to file an informal appeal online at **tax.buncombecounty.org/appeal**. The property owner's appeal must be completed and returned within the specified timeframe and must include information to support the owner's opinion of value. The Assessor asks that appeals be returned within 30 days of the date you receive the notice. This gives the appraiser time to review and respond to your appeal in a timely manner. Once the appeal is received, it will be reviewed by an appraiser in the Assessor's Office. The result of the appeal, or informal review, will be mailed to the property owner. The property owner then has 30 days from the date on the notice to file a formal appeal if they are not satisfied with the results of the informal review.

The second step in the appeal process is to file a formal appeal with the Assessor's Office within 30 days from the date of the informal appeal notice. After submission of the formal appeal by the property owner, an Assessor's Office appraiser will contact the property owner to discuss the value and verify information supplied. Should the owner not agree with the appraiser's opinion of value, the formal appeal will be scheduled and presented to the Board of Equalization and Review. Both property owner and appraisal staff will present to the Board of Equalization and Review. The Board of Equalization and Review will review and make a decision. That decision will be mailed to the property owner within 30 days of the date of the Board meeting.

The third step in the appeal process arises if the property owner does not agree with the decision made by the Board of Equalization and Review. The property owner may, within 30 days of the date on the notice from the Board of Equalization and Review, file an appeal with the North Carolina Property Tax Commission. All of these appeals will be heard in Raleigh, North Carolina. An appellant must file an appeal with the Board of Equalization and Review before filing with the North Carolina Property Tax Commission.

The fourth and final step in the appeal process occurs when the appellant does not agree with the decision from the North Carolina Property Tax Commission and appeals to the North Carolina Court of Appeals and North Carolina Supreme Court.

If you have any questions, please contact the Buncombe County Assessor's Office, (828) 250-4940. Begin the online appeal process by visiting **tax.buncombecounty.org/appeal**.



KEITH MILLER
TAX ASSESSOR



JEFF CANDLER
RESIDENTIAL APPRAISAL
MANAGER



JOSEPH TURNER
APPRAISAL ANALYST



BOB MAY
COMMERCIAL APPRAISAL
MANAGER



SALLY HANNAH
SPECIAL PROGRAMS
MANAGER



ERIC CREGGER
GIS ANALYST/LAND
RECORDS MANAGER

ASK **THE** EXPERTS

Frequently asked questions by Buncombe County citizens.

DOES THE ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE CHANGE AT THE SAME RATE ON ALL PROPERTIES?

No, market value does not change at the same rate on all properties. There are differences between individual properties and neighborhoods located within the County. In one area of the County the sales may indicate a significant decrease in value in a given year, while in another area of the County the sales may indicate a significant increase in value in the same year. Many factors are considered during the appraisal process. Some factors affecting value can be location, condition, size, construction quality, number of bathrooms, finished basements, pools, garages, economic conditions, etc. **Market value is determined by buyers and sellers in the local real estate market.** It is also possible for properties within the same neighborhood to show different value changes.

WHAT IS TAXABLE REAL PROPERTY?

Real property includes land only, land and structures, or improvements on the land to include manufactured homes on a permanent foundation. A system of automatically listing real property in Buncombe County is made possible through the coordinated efforts of the County Planning Department, Permits and Inspections, Land Records, and the Register of Deeds. This does not relieve the responsibility of the citizen to list improvements.

HOW WILL I BE ADVISED OF MY 2021 REAPPRAISAL?

A notice of reappraisal will be mailed to all Buncombe County real property owners on file with the Buncombe County Assessor's Office on or about January 30, 2021.

HOW IS REAL PROPERTY VALUED?

Every four years the Buncombe County Tax Assessor completes a reappraisal of all real property in the County. This process is called reappraisal. The purpose of reappraisal is to comply with North Carolina law which requires property to be valued, or appraised, at its current market value at least every eight years and to ensure all taxpayers are taxed fairly and equitably. Values are placed on real property using either one or a combination of the following appraisal approaches:

- **Sales comparison or market approach:** This approach compares the selling prices of similar properties and places a value on those properties based on actual selling prices. This approach is the most accurate when there are numerous sales occurring.
- **Cost approach:** Values are determined on what it would cost to replace a similar property at current building costs minus depreciation, based on a variety of factors and the age of the property. This approach is best used for unique properties or newer construction.
- **Income approach:** This approach is used primarily on income producing properties such as apartment buildings or business offices. Revenues are analyzed to determine a net operating income. This income is then capitalized to determine a value for the property.

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH MY REAPPRAISAL?

There is an appeal process for property owners that disagree with the appraised value. First, an informal appeal form must be completed and returned to the Assessor's Office prior to April of the year in which the appeal is being made. You may start the process online at tax.buncombecounty.org/appeal to submit the form electronically or call the Assessor's Office at (828) 250-4940 to request a form. Please include any documentation such as, photographs, sales records, appraisals, etc. you may have. Your appeal will be thoroughly reviewed. If the property owner would like a face to face meeting, one will be scheduled at a convenient time for the owner.

Adjustments to values may be made based on re-analysis of appealed property. Once the owner is notified of the re-analysis results, they have the option of accepting the value or appealing to the Board of Equalization and Review.

If after the results of the appeal to the Board of Equalization and Review the property owner does not agree, they may appeal to the North Carolina Property Tax Commission in Raleigh. Very rarely is this step required. From the Property Tax Commission, a property owner may appeal to the North Carolina Court of Appeals and finally to the North Carolina Supreme Court. Appeals to the state level are very rare because every effort is made by the Assessor's Office to resolve issues locally among individuals most familiar with property values in Buncombe County.

WILL REAPPRAISAL AFFECT MY PROPERTY TAX BILLS?

An increase or decrease in the appraised value of a property may not predict whether the property tax will increase, decrease, or remain the same. Only after the tax rates are set by the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners at the beginning of each fiscal year can the property tax be determined.

WHAT IF I BUY OR SELL REAL PROPERTY DURING THE YEAR?

The owner of the property as of January 1 of the current tax year is responsible for taxes for the entire year, unless the property changes ownership during the tax year. If there is a change of ownership, the owner of record on the following January 6, or date interest begins, and any subsequent owner will be held liable for any unpaid real estate taxes. The Tax Collector does not prorate real estate taxes. Any needed proration of real estate taxes due to a change of ownership should be handled between the buyer and seller at the time of the sale. The Collection Department will attempt to send the tax notice to the owner of record as of January 1 as well as any subsequent owners. Tax liens against the property will remain in effect until the taxes and interest are paid in full.

WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY REAL PROPERTY TAX BILL?

Tax notices, commonly known as bills, are mailed in early August each year and become due on September 1. However, there is a four month grace period allowing property owners time to pay their taxes until the following January 5 before interest is added. January 5 is the deadline for paying property taxes. If you are interested in a payment plan for your tax bill, contact the Tax Collector at **(828) 250-4910**.

ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS OR SPECIAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE?

Under specific circumstances property owners may be eligible for reduced taxes or participation in other deferment or special programs. To participate in these programs, requirements specified by North Carolina law must be met. Available programs are listed below with contact information or visit our website for additional information, buncombecounty.org/tax.

Elderly, Disabled, Disabled Veteran Relief

For more information:

- Contact the Buncombe County Exemption Division at **(828) 250-4915** or visit the **Senior/Disability** section of our website.

Exempt Property

North Carolina law allows for certain types of property to be exempt from property taxes if they meet the requirements specified. Some types of exempt property may include but are not limited to:

- **Property used for religious purposes**
- **Property set aside for burial**
- **Property used for educational, scientific, or literary purposes**
- **Property used for charitable purposes**

Applications for exemption are accepted by the Tax Assessor during January of each year. For more information:

- Contact the Buncombe County Exemption Division at **(828) 250-4915** or visit the **Tax Exemptions/Deferments** section of our website.

Present-Use Program

The North Carolina General Assembly enacted the Present-Use Value Program allowing reduced tax assessments for individually owned property currently in use for agriculture, horticulture or forestry. Property accepted into this program is assessed at its present-use value as an operating farm. The present-use value is usually less than the market value of the property. The difference between the present-use value and the market value is deferred. When the property or a portion of the property is removed from the program for any reason, the deferred taxes for the current year and the previous three years, plus interest, become due. Applications for this program are accepted during January of each year. For more information:

- Contact the Buncombe County Tax Assessor at **(828) 250-4915** or visit the **Tax Exemptions/Deferments** section of our website.

HOW ARE TAXES DETERMINED?

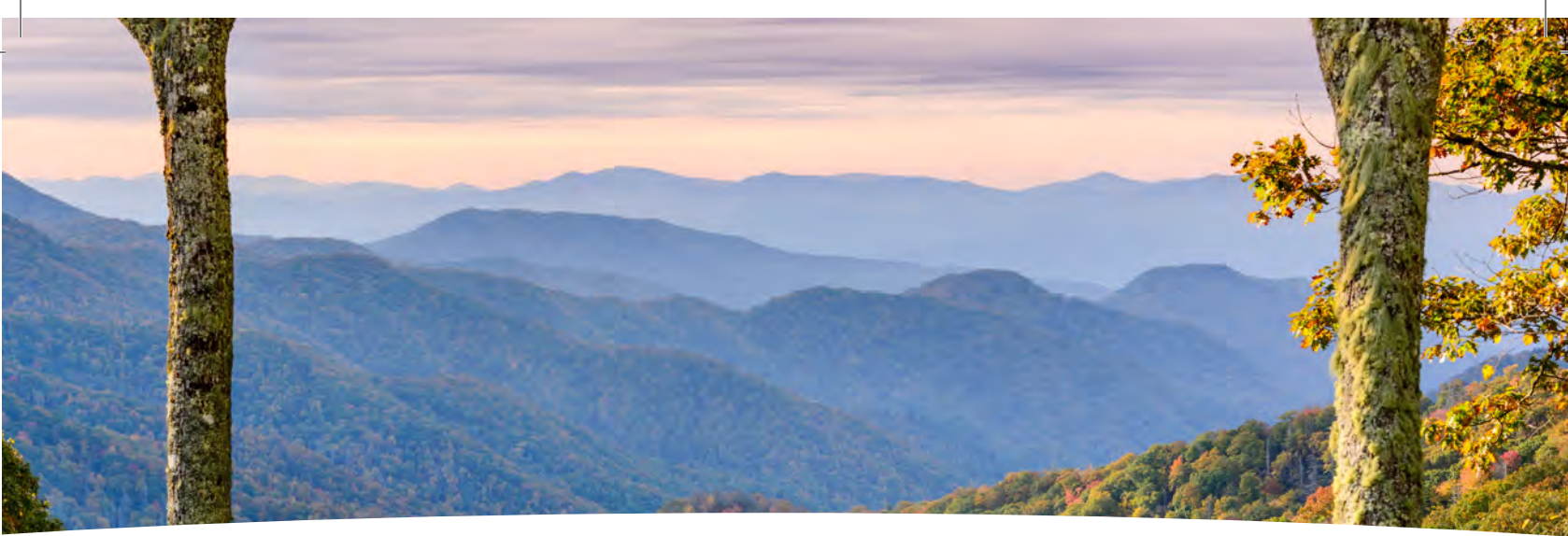
It is the responsibility of the Tax Assessor to value all taxable property within the County. The total value of all the property within the County is the tax base. Each County agency or department submits an annual operating budget to the County Manager. The County Manager then submits a recommended total County budget to the County Commissioners for their consideration. The Board of Commissioners reviews the recommended budget and conducts a public hearing for citizen input. By the end of June, the Board of Commissioners adopts a budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1. The budget is divided by the value of the tax base to determine a tax rate. The tax rate is based on amounts per each \$100 of property value. A similar process is completed for each municipality and fire district within Buncombe County.

WHERE AND HOW CAN I PAY MY TAXES?

Property owners have several options for paying taxes due.

- In person at Buncombe County Tax Department, 94 Coxe Ave., Asheville, NC 28801.
- By mail using the self-addressed envelope included with your tax notice. Send to P.O. Box 3140, Asheville, NC 28802.
- Drop off your tax payment with the payment coupon in our drop box located in the driveway of the Family Justice Center at 35 Woodfin Street.
- Drop off your tax payment with the payment coupon in our drop box located next to the main entrance of the Tax Department at 94 Coxe Ave.
- Online credit card and electronic check payments, visit buncombecounty.org/tax.
- Credit card by telephone, call **(877) 690-3729**, enter the jurisdiction code **4301** and follow the instructions
- Preauthorized debit program, contact the Tax Collector at **(828) 250-4910** for more information and to get started.

Tax bills and payment receipts may be printed by visiting buncombecounty.org/tax.



TAXTERMINOLOGY

Ad Valorem Tax

Ad valorem is derived from the Latin ad valentiam, meaning according to the value. An ad valorem tax is a property tax based on the assessed value of the property, which may not be equivalent to its market value. Ad valorem tax is used for real estate, personal property and motor vehicles.

Appraised Value

Also known as “market value.” This is the value determined by the Buncombe County Assessor’s Office before any exemptions or deferrals are applied. Appraised value is the most probable price the property would sell for in an open market between a willing seller and an able buyer.

Assessed Value

The dollar value assigned to a property for the purpose of measuring applicable taxes. Assessed value equals the appraisal or fair market value of a property less the deferred or exempt value. Assessed value is multiplied by the tax rate to calculate the amount of property taxes due.

Board of Equalization and Review

A board appointed by the County Commissioners that consists of long-time Buncombe County residents with a real estate or business background who are familiar with local real estate values.

Fair Market Value

The price that property would sell for on the open market between a willing seller and a financially able buyer, neither being under any compulsion to buy or to sell and both having reasonable knowledge of the characteristics of the property.

Fiscal Year

A period of time used for accounting purposes and preparing financial statements. Buncombe County’s fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.

Parcel

A piece of land of any size in one ownership.

Personal Property

Property that is not permanently attached to real property and can be moved. Personal property includes, but is not limited to, manufactured homes, boats, motorhomes, jet skis, unregistered motor vehicles, trailers, airplanes, household furnishings in income producing residential rental property, etc. It is the responsibility of the owner to list personal property with the Buncombe County Assessor’s Office in January of each year to avoid incurring a penalty for late listing.

Reassessment

The process of determining the value of real property for property tax purpose. A reassessment is required by North Carolina State law at least every eight years and is completed every four years in Buncombe County.

Tax District

A political subdivision of one or more assessment districts where a governmental unit has the authority to levy taxes.

Reappraisal

The process of determining the value of real property for property tax purposes.



BUNCOMBE COUNTY
NORTH CAROLINA

BUNCOMBECOUNTYTAX

LOCATED AT:
94 Coxe Avenue
Asheville, NC

HOURS OF OPERATION:
Monday - Friday
8 am - 5 pm

VISIT US:
buncombetax.org
buncombecounty.org
buncombecounty.org/MyValue2021

CALL:
828.250.4940