

## **Information about Buncombe County's 2013 Reappraisal**

The results of the 2013 revaluation process will be mailed soon to every property owner in Buncombe County. The Buncombe County Real Estate Assessment Department is committed to the fair, uniform and equitable treatment of each property owner. All of our appraisers are certified as Real Property Appraisers by the North Carolina Department of Revenue.

We are your neighbors and want to do the best job possible. We hope the following information will help answer the most commonly asked questions about reappraisal.

- **What is reappraisal?**

We are required by North Carolina General Statutes to value property at 100% of its market value. A reappraisal is the process of valuing all property in Buncombe County at 100% of its market value. The last reappraisal was January 1, 2006.

- **What is market value?**

Market value is the value that a property would sell for in the market place. The Tax Office does not create market value. Market value is created by people who buy and sell property. Our responsibility is to study sales information and assess property base on that information. Foreclosures, forced sales, family sales, and other unreliable sales are not used to develop fair market value.

- **Why is property revalued?**

During the time between reappraisals individual property values change at different rates, but the assessed values remain the same. These changes create inequity because the assessed values are based on old sales information. Some property values have changed at a slower rate and will remain assessed at 100% of their market value. Other property values have increased at a faster rate and are assessed at considerably less than their present market value. The longer time between reappraisals, the greater the inequity created between properties. This is especially true in a rapidly changing real estate market. The reappraisal process equalizes these changes so that everyone is assessed at 100% of their market value.

- **How is my property value determined?**

We consider many factors when developing information for the reappraisal. Information is gathered from property owners, local realtors, building contractors, building material suppliers and lending institutions. Information such as replacement costs, land prices, comparable sales, and depreciation are gathered and analyzed. Each neighborhood is analyzed to develop the new market value for each property based on sales that have occurred in the neighborhood.

Property values are determined by the people who buy and sell real estate. The new market value reflects what has happened in the local real estate market.

*Appraisers use a combination of the following appraisal methods to value your property.*

**Cost approach-** estimates the cost to replace your building new, then subtracts for depreciation to determine the value of the improvement. The improvement amount is then added to the new land value.

**Sales approach-** compares your property to similar properties that have sold during the last four years.

**Income approach-** determines the value of commercial property based on the amount of income it will produce in the market place.

- **How does the reappraisal affect my property?**

Every property will have a new assessed value assigned for 2013. When the new value is mailed to you, review the value and decide if the assessed value is reasonable. You have the opportunity to appeal the assessed value of your property. The assessed value will be used to calculate the 2013 tax bills that will be mailed in August 2013.

- **How do I file an appeal of my property value if I do not agree with my assessment?**

Our office offers you three easy ways to appeal:

- Complete the attached 2013 Informal Review form included with this letter.
- You may call our office at (828) 250-4940 to schedule an appointment.
- Complete an Online Informal Review form at [www.buncombecounty.org](http://www.buncombecounty.org)

With your appeal please, attach any documentation such as photos, sales information or appraisals to support your appeal, and return it to the Tax Department within 30 days. Include information stating why you are appealing the assessed value.

Assessed values cannot be changed based only on the amount of increase or decrease in value or because your tax bill may increase. Simply writing “too high” or “too low” is not enough information for the appraisal staff to change the assessed value. The appraisal staff has based the assessed value on the best sales information we have available to us. We must have a reason to adjust the assessed value based on additional market information that you provide. You may have information that affects the values of your property that our office was not aware of when developing the assessed value.

The information you supply will be reviewed and you will be notified of the results of this review. The assessed value can be decreased, increased or be unchanged based on this review process.

The review process takes time to complete. We expect to have the appeal process completed by late summer. If you do not agree with the results of the informal appeal process, you may file a formal appeal to the Board of Equalization and Review. The notice you receive from the informal appeal will have instructions about how to file a formal appeal.

- **Will the reappraisal cause my tax bill to increase?**

We do not know. The tax rate plus your property value will determine that amount of your property tax bill. Tax rates are set based on local government budgets. The tax rates are set by the six municipalities, the County, fire districts and the Asheville City School district. We will not know the amount of your tax bills until the rates are set in June 2013. Once the tax rates are set a bill will be created based on the assessed value of each property.

- **Are any exclusions available for the elderly or disabled?**

Yes, there are three different types of exclusions:

Senior/Disabled Person- if on January 1<sup>st</sup> you were age 65 or older or permanently disabled and have an income of \$28,100 or less per year which does include social security, you may qualify for an exemption of \$25,000 or up to 50% of the value of your permanent residence in Buncombe County.

Circuit Breaker- is a deferred tax program. This program defers taxes based on your income. You must meet the age or disability requirements above and have owned and occupied the property for the past 5 years. For a qualifying owner whose income amount for the previous year does not exceed \$28,100, the owners taxes will be limited to 4% of their income. Should the owners income exceed \$28,100, but does not exceed 150% of the eligibility limit (\$42,150 for 2013) the owners taxes will be limited to 5% of the income.

Disabled Veterans Exemption: Disabled veteran is defined as a veteran whose character of service at separation was honorable or under honorable conditions and who has a total and permanent service-connected disability or received benefits for specially adapted housing under 38 USC 2101. You may qualify for an exemption up to \$45,000 off the assessed value of your permanent residence in Buncombe County. This benefit is also available to a surviving spouse (who has not remarried) of either a disabled veteran as defined above, or a veteran who died as result of a service-connected condition.

