

“Revaluation”

The City of Manitowoc is currently going through a revaluation of all properties within its jurisdiction. This means that all homes and businesses have been visited by property appraisers from a consultant working for our city who are gathering data for the purpose of setting true market values for our entire city.

Most people probably fear the assessor as much as they fear the dentist, but just as with your dentist, your fear of the city assessor is unfounded.

The city assessor’s responsibility is to attach a true, accurate and fair value to your property in order that it can be taxed fairly in relationship to other properties in the city. Over the course of time, values in our city, or any city, can become “out of whack” as a result of changes in the real estate marketplace. As we all know, when it comes to real estate values, its all about “location, location, location”.

Well, over the course of time, Manitowoc’s property values have become inaccurate enough that state law has now required us to undertake this revaluation.

Many homes in our community have “appreciated” somewhat in value, some have become less valuable and some properties, such as lakefront properties, have appreciated dramatically in value. This all makes sense as we watch the value of neighborhoods go up and down.

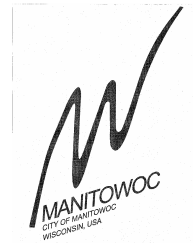
A revaluation of properties within a city employs market comparisons when setting new values on a home or small commercial business facility. The Assessors’ Office “tracks” sales in an area of town to identify comparable types of homes that are changing hands. By comparing similar homes that have been sold to an existing property, a new value can be established just as if that home had been put on the market and sold. This methodology is employed throughout the city and the end result is the identification of the true and fair values of all of our city’s properties.

A change in value in your home does not automatically mean an increase in property taxes. It takes the local unit of government to raise your taxes by increasing the budget.

Let’s consider this simplified example of computing taxes to help us understand.

Say a city budget requires a tax rate of five dollars per thousand dollars of value attached to your home. In this case, if your home is worth 100,000 dollars, then your taxes for city services would be 500 dollars. That’s because there are one hundred “thousand dollar” increments to tax in a one hundred thousand dollar home.

After a revaluation, let’s suppose the new value placed on this same home equals 125 thousand dollars and that because of all the “new” one thousand dollar increments discovered by the revaluation, that the city’s new tax rate is set at three dollars per thousand. This home’s new property tax would be 375 dollars, and not 500 dollars.



This is a very simplified version of how a revaluation works, but it does demonstrate the basic concepts. As stated earlier, there is no need to fear the revaluation. Its purpose is to apply basic valuation techniques in order that all taxpayers in our city are treated fairly when it comes to the payment of property taxes for city and county services, LTC and our public schools.

Here are a couple of quick notes of city-wide interest.

Please do not load the street gutter or curb apron with your yard waste. This causes suspended solids, otherwise known as a “bunch of crap”, to get into our storm water. Getting rid of these suspended solids will cost taxpayers lots of money as our assemblyman and senator voted to create even tougher rules than the EPA were going to require of city governments to clean up our rivers and lakes.

On May 6th a Chili Bowl will be held at Tony’s Pizza to benefit this year’s “Thunder on the Lakeshore” Air Show. Tickets are five dollars and not only buy you the chance to taste some amazing chili, but also allow you to bid on an incredible offering of wonderful things...like a flight in a World War II bomber, like the one that dropped the bomb on Hiroshima, or a ride in a Hot Air Balloon.

Manitowoc Mayor Kevin Crawford may be reached at 920-686-6980.