



**Carteret County Tax Department
Courthouse Square
Beaufort, North Carolina 28516
(252) 728-8485**

Carteret County Tax Department

www.carteretcountygov.org

Dear Fellow Citizens:

The Carteret County Tax Department is responsible for carrying out the North Carolina law that requires counties to periodically reassess all real property within their boundaries. The state enacted this law in order to establish uniformity in our property tax system and to make sure that the tax levied is based upon the correct value of property you own. Since the amount of tax you pay is based upon value and rate, it is important that the county assess your property by a uniform standard. That standard is defined by law as "fair market value". It is only when all property is assessed at its fair market value that the public can be assured that the tax burden is being properly shared by all. The purpose of this revaluation is to update the values of properties that have changed at varying rates over the last six years. Having up to date values ensures that our real estate tax rate is being properly applied according to law.

When revaluation is completed you will receive a notice of our offices' assessment of the current fair market value of your property. We will base our valuation on what comparable properties are selling for in your area. We anticipate that we will have nearly 60,000 real estate parcels in the county by 2007 and it is possible for some errors to occur. Please contact my office if you have any questions about your property valuation or the process we have followed in arriving at the valuation.

Sincerely,

Carl L. Tilghman
Tax Administrator

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Fair Market Value?

Fair market value is the price that a willing and able buyer will pay a willing and able seller on the open market. The estimated fair market value arrived at during the revaluation process is the result of analyzing ordinary real estate transactions that take place in our local market. The estimated fair market value should be comparable to similar properties that have sold or are presently on the market.

Is there an alternative to Countywide Revaluation?

No. North Carolina General Statute 105-286 requires that all counties do a complete countywide revaluation at least every eight years. Our last revaluation was in 2001. Due to significant changes in the market, the county has chosen to do the revaluation on a four year cycle beginning 2007. The four year cycle ensures that the assessed tax values are closer to the fair market values.

Who conducts the revaluation?

The 2007 revaluation is being done "in house" by our local tax office appraisal staff. We have trained and experienced personnel who live and work in Carteret County. They are familiar with our county, the real estate market, and local properties. They are eager to do a quality job for their fellow citizens.

When will the new values take effect?

The new assessed values will be effective as of January 1, 2007. These values will be the basis for the tax bills that will be sent out in July of 2007 and due September 1, 2007.

How will the new assessed value affect my tax bill?

As a general rule, most assessed values will go up as a result of revaluation. Some areas of the county will see only a slight or moderate change in assessed value, while properties in areas of high demand are likely to see a significant increase.

The impact of the revaluation on your property tax bill will depend on two factors: 1) the tax rate established by the Board of Commissioners for the year of the revaluation and 2) the percentage increase in the assessed tax value of your property relative to all other properties in the county. After a revaluation, most counties are able to decrease the property tax rate because the total taxable value in the county has increased as a result of revaluation. When a county board decreases the property tax rate to a level that will generate approximately the same amount of property tax revenue as the prior year, the new tax rate is considered to be "revenue neutral". If the County Board sets the new rate as "revenue neutral", property owners whose tax value increase is equal to the average percentage increase will not have an increase or decrease in their tax bill. Property owners whose tax value has increased more than the average percentage increase will see an increase in their tax bill, while property owners whose tax value has increased less than the average will see a decrease in their tax bill. For example, if the 2007 revaluation results in a total increase in the county's assessed tax value of 20%, and your property tax value have increased by 25%, your tax bill would increase. If your property tax value has increased by only 10%, you would see a decrease in your tax bill.

If the County Board sets the new tax rate at a level that is higher than “revenue neutral”, all property owners whose tax value increase is greater than the average will experience a tax increase, and depending on how much higher the tax rate is, some of the property owners whose tax value increase is less than average will also experience a tax increase. If the County Board sets the new tax rate at a level that is lower than “revenue neutral”, all property owners whose tax value increase is less than the average will experience a tax decrease, and depending on how much lower the rate is, some of the property owners whose tax value increase is higher than the average will also experience a tax decrease.

How are the values determined?

The values are determined by a systematic process, which includes the following:

- 1) All data for each property is verified and updated. Appraisal staff visits the property if necessary.
- 2) Tax Office staff develop the Schedule of Values for land and buildings. The Schedule of Values assigns different values to different categories of land and buildings. For example, all sound front property in a particular area is assigned the same unit rate. Similarly, different values per square foot of buildings are assigned to different types of construction.
- 3) The Schedule of Values is based on current market conditions. Tax Office staff reviews recent property sales, current building costs, and commercial property income data to develop the Schedule of Values.
- 4) The appropriate schedules for the land and improvements are applied to specific properties to arrive at the fair market value or assessed value of the property.

The final assessed value will be shown on individual property records maintained in the tax office. These records identify the physical features of the property appraised and other factors having effect upon its value.

What if I believe that my property is assessed higher than the fair market value?

If you disagree with the new assessed value of your property you will have a process through which to appeal. Located on the back are steps for each level of appeal. After exhausting all administrative appeals, you have the right to petition the North Carolina Court of Appeals for judicial review.

Procedure for informal review

INFORMAL REVIEWS WILL BE SCHEDULED BY FILLING OUT THE SECOND SHEET THAT IS WITH YOUR REVALUATION NOTICE. WE ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE ALL REQUEST IN WRITING. THIS MUST BE DONE BY FILLING OUT THIS SHEET. WE WILL CALL OR MAIL YOU A TIME FOR YOUR INFORMAL HEARING.

PLEASE FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW FOR THE APPROPRIATE HEARING

Appeals procedure after informal review

- 1) If a taxpayer wishes to appeal a decision based on the results of the informal review, the following steps must be taken. Please call the Carteret County Tax Department at (252) 728-8485 or visit our office on the first floor of the Administration Building, Courthouse Square, Beaufort, North Carolina for a form requesting a hearing before the Board of Equalization and Review.
- 2) A written request for a hearing before the Carteret County Board of Equalization and Review must be filed with the Tax Assessor at Courthouse Square, Beaufort, North Carolina 28516.
- 3) The request for hearing must be made prior to the adjournment of the Carteret County Board of Equalization and Review. Notice of all hearings dates, times and places, including adjournment date and time, will be published in the local newspaper in March 2007.

Appeals Procedures of Board of Equalization and Review Hearings

If a taxpayer wishes to appeal a decision from actions resulting from the Carteret County Board of Equalization and Review the following steps are to be taken:

- 1) Appeals of decisions of the Carteret County Board of Equalization and Review must be filed with the Property Tax Commission.

Address: **N.C. Department of Revenue
Property Tax Commission
P. O. Box 871
Raleigh, North Carolina 276092**

- 2) Appeals to the Property Tax Commission must be on file within 30 days after the Board of Equalization and Review has mailed a notice of its decision to the property owner. A notice of appeal filed with the Property Tax Commission shall state the grounds for the appeal. A property owner who files a notice of appeal shall send a copy of the notice to the Carteret County Tax Assessor.

Address: **Tax Assessor
Carteret County
Courthouse Square
Beaufort, North Carolina 28516**

- 3) A notice of appeal is considered to be filed with the Property tax Commission when it is received in the Office of the Commission.