

City of Black River Falls Revaluation FAQ

The following list of questions are the most common raised during a revaluation and they help to explain the process, its necessity, and the result of a community wide revaluation.

Q1. What does revaluation really mean?

A1. It means that the City of Black River Falls will make a present day, full market assessment of your property. In other words, if your property were sold for \$100,000 at the present time, this amount would approximate your new assessment.

Q2. Why is this revaluation necessary?

A2. State Statutes require municipalities to be within 10% of full market value at least once within a five-year period. The city has been outside that range and out of compliance for 4 years. A revaluation is done to bring assessments closer to 100% of full market value. The last time there was a city-wide revaluation was in 2008.

Q3. Will this revaluation automatically increase my taxes?

A3. By itself, a reassessment does not increase or decrease tax revenue; it merely redistributes the total tax burden more fairly. Some property owners will see increases while some will see decreases. The amount of total tax collected will remain the same unless budgets are changed. ***Reassessment itself is revenue neutral.*** The revaluation does not change the total amount of taxes collected by the municipality but rather changes the total assessed value of the city (tax Base) of which the tax levy is divided into which typically will cause a reduction of the mill rate.

Q4. Do all assessments change at the same rate?

A4. No. Several factors can affect the rate of change such as location, style of property, age, condition, undocumented updates, ect.

Q5. If the new assessments are made at full value, won't this raise taxes?

A5. No, this will not raise the total amount of taxes levied on property in the municipality. With the total of all the assessments in the city increasing, the tax rate would be reduced by the same percentage to generate the same tax dollars.

Q6. What process is being used to arrive at a fair assessment?

A6. The revaluation program is based on the sales approach. The value of properties in the community are compared to actual sale prices supplied to the city by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. These are actual property sales, and they are then compared to the assessed value of like properties using a computer model.

Q7. What information does the assessor use to determine assessments?

A7. Assessors consider information from many sources to determine your assessment including: • Comparable property sales, including recent arm's length sale(s) of comparable properties; • Current construction costs; • Improvements to property; • Location; • Depreciation; • Legal restrictions (ie. zoning ordinances); • General economic changes in the community

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Q8. Will my home or apartment be inspected?

A8. This is a full exterior revaluation. This means the Assessor will review recent sales, existing property records and view each property exterior to calculate assessments. An appraiser will not need to view the interior of your home in most cases. If they do need to view the interior, you will receive a letter from Bowmar Appraisal, Inc.

Q9. How will I know if an appraiser visited my house?

A9. The appraiser will leave a door tag indicating they were there and whether they have any additional questions for the property owner.

Q10. Will the person that comes to my door be able to tell me what my assessment will be?

A10. No, the field representative gathers data only. The actual assessment will be calculated later.

Q11. Can I refuse to let the appraiser enter my home?

A11. Yes, you may refuse information and entry to your home or business.

Q12. Will I have the right to appeal this assessment if I refuse entry in my home or on my property?

A12. Yes and No, if you refuse entry to your home you still have the right to appeal. State law allows a property owner to refuse entry into the home and does not prohibit the owner from objecting to their assessment under Section 70.05 (4m) State Statutes. If you refuse entry on your property for an exterior view, after a written request from assessor, you are not allowed to appeal under Section 70.47 (7) (aa) State Statutes.

Q13. How soon after the field inspection will I know what my new assessment will be?

A13. Each property owner will be mailed a notice of their property's assessment, called the Notice of Assessment. The notice will list your current property value and your new property value. The Notice of Assessment will be sent as soon as the figures are available.

Q14. Will I have a chance to discuss this new assessment with someone if I feel that it is too high?

A14. Yes, on the same notice you receive informing you of your new assessment, a date and time will be indicated when you will be able to appear at an informal hearing (Open Book) to discuss whatever questions you may have regarding your property.

Q15. At the Open Book, will I be able to discuss my property with someone in private?

A15. Yes, all conferences will be private.

Q16. Will I be able to compare my property with similar types?

A16. Yes, we encourage this comparison. It is one of the basic criteria used to arrive at a fair assessment. The assessment roll is always open for inspection.

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Q17. What if, after Open Book, I am still dissatisfied with my assessment?

A17. The formal Board of Review will be held shortly after these conferences. After filing a written petition of objection with the Municipal Clerk at least 48 hours in advance of the Board of Review, you can appear before the Board of Review. In addition, you must complete the Objection to Real Property Assessment and file it with the Municipal Clerk prior to or within the first two hours of the Board of Review's first scheduled hearing. At the Board of Review you will give testimony and have the Board decide whether or not your assessment is fair.

Q18. What if I am still not satisfied?

A18. You can then appeal the decision to the Circuit Court.

Q19. When will we be billed based on the new assessment?

A19. The tax bill you receive in December 2024 will be based on the new assessment.