



COUNTY PROPERTY REAPPRAISAL

All property owners in Franklin County will soon receive a letter from the county auditor indicating the tentative new appraised value of their property, and the next logical question most of us will ask is “What does this mean for my property taxes?”. When property is reassessed, likely upward, you may or may not see an increase in your tax bill. Why? It’s complicated. Here’s my attempt to simplify it.

Property taxes are calculated based on the underlying value of the property. Since property values change over time, Ohio has a process in place to periodically reappraise every property. This is done by each county auditor every six years (along with a more simplified “update” every three years) and is mostly based on recent sales. Franklin County, like other parts of Ohio, is experiencing historic property value increases based on a vibrant central Ohio economy, population growth, lack of housing stock, and outside investment in the area.

The important thing to know though, is that there is not a one-to-one relationship between property value increases and taxes. Worthington Schools will not see a large spike in taxes collected. That’s because Ohio enacted a law in the 1970’s that protects homeowners from a rise in taxes simply due to an increase in property value. It’s called House Bill 920, and it works by reducing what is called the “effective millage”, or tax rate, so that, when multiplied by the higher property value, the owner pays roughly the same amount as they did the year before, all other factors being equal. The School District also collects, in total, roughly the same amount as it did the year before the reappraisal.

Now, the more complicated part is that not all areas and properties are reappraised and impacted the same. It’s all about how each property compares to the average increase. If a property is reappraised higher than the average, that owner will pay more taxes whereas a property that reappraised lower than average will experience a tax decrease. The School District receives roughly the same in total. The process is rooted in fairness and protection for all property owners and why it’s often called “equalization”.

Muddying the waters, a bit, there is a small portion of the tax rate, called “inside mills” that does grow with reappraisal. It’s the first 10 mills (Worthington Schools share is 4.5 mills) and represents only about 11% of this past year’s total mills in our District.

Lastly, for Worthington Schools specifically, voters approved an incremental levy in 2022, so independent of the reappraisal process, the tax rate itself will go up next year (although because of the reappraisal process it won’t be the full 2 mills).

Franklin County Auditor Michael Stinziano has done a tremendous job providing outreach and educational sessions for residents to better understand the property tax reappraisal process, including a calculator to help estimate your future taxes. It can be found by clicking [THIS LINK](#). He also explains the process for how you can appeal the tentative value that has been assigned to your property.

Taxes in Ohio are complicated, and it’s natural to be concerned when experiencing historic reappraisals. However, in Worthington Schools, assuming your property goes up about what the average is (35%), your school property taxes should only increase roughly the amount of the additional 2 incremental mills and a small amount due to inside mills. Feel free to reach out to me with any questions, and contact the auditor’s office if you feel your property valuation is inaccurate, as you play an important role in the reappraisal process.

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