



## How to Use Your Tax Kit and Instructions on Appealing and FAQ's

Thank you for purchasing your Chandler Reports Tax Kit! Below is information on each of the reports included in your Tax Kit as well as some hints on how to help you use the information you've just received.

1. The **Property Profile** report is the information on your house. It includes (where available) the original building permit information, current square footage and other physical information, sales history of your house, original sale of your lot, and the legal information obtained from the assessor's office. If your house was built before 1974, we will not have the original building permit data or the lot sale. If you have owned the property since 1968, we will not have a sale of it. Use this report to compare the physical description on your home to the physical description listed on the Assessor's Card as a double check for accuracy. If the Assessor's Card list more square footage than you actually have, you can request that the Assessor's Office send someone out measure your home.
2. The **Sales Comparables** consists of two parts. The first part is a listing of the houses sold within the past 24 months that are similar in size to yours. The second part is a list of the most recent sales in your neighborhood that are not necessarily as comparable to your home based on a handful of variables including square footage, the number of stories and/or the number of bathrooms, but have still sold within the past 24 months in your neighborhood. Drive or walk by these houses and analyze each one as though you were a real estate appraiser. The purpose is to get an approximate idea of the value of your house, based on what the other houses in your neighborhood have been selling for in the past two years. If a house on the list is better than yours, i.e. is larger, has more bathrooms, a pool or better parking, then your house may be worth less than that one. Conversely, if a house is not as good as yours, your house is probably worth more, and would likely sell for more.
3. The **Assessor's Card** on your property is information from the 2010 certified tax roll. It contains all the information in the assessor's database about your property. Check this information carefully to verify that it is accurate. If it is incorrect, let the assessor's office know so that they can correct their data. You can compare the physical description that the assessor has on your home to the Property Profile report included in your Tax Kit as a double check for accuracy.
4. The **Foreclosure Effect** report is based on actual foreclosures that have occurred in the past 24 months in your neighborhood within  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from your home. The report shows the possible compounding effect recent foreclosures may have on the value of your home.

When using this report to check the accuracy of your new property tax appraisal, first check the Assessor's Card and make sure that the information is correct. Compare the "Chandler" information from the Property Profile with the Assessor's Card to make sure that the assessor started with the correct data. In other words, if the assessor thinks that your house is larger than it really is, then your appraisal probably is too high. Next, check that the property appraisal is "in-line" with what your house is worth. Use the Comparable Sales report as described above to get an idea of what your house is worth. If your home is in an area where there are several foreclosures, use the Foreclosure Effect report to see the possible effect the recent foreclosures could have on the value of your home. After using all the information in your Tax Kit, if you feel your new property tax appraisal value is too high you will need to contact the Assessor's Office to file an appeal or informal review. You can contact the Assessor's Office by calling their answer center at (901) 373-7444 or by going to their website [www.assessor.shelby.tn.us](http://www.assessor.shelby.tn.us).





## Frequently Asked Questions About the Current Property Reappraisal

### **How do I appeal?**

You'll need sales comps and information on sales in your area. Chandler Reports has the most detailed and most respected information available. You'll then either call the Assessor's office (901) 379-7333 or go to their Web site [www.assessor.shelby.tn.us](http://www.assessor.shelby.tn.us) to start the appeal.

### **My appraisal went up; how much will my taxes increase?**

Your taxes might not go up at all. After the assessor certifies the tax rolls, the City Treasurer and the County Trustee must (by state law) adjust the tax rate so that the total property tax revenue is the same as it was before the reappraisal. Some people will pay more taxes, while others will pay less.

**Last time my house was appraised for \$75,000, this time they appraised it for \$125,000. I know property values didn't go up that much.** Is the new appraisal in line with what your house is worth now? If it is, don't complain, you got a lucky break last round. If, however, the new appraisal is more than what your house is probably worth; call the assessor's answer center at (901) 379-7333 or go to [www.assessor.shelby.tn.us](http://www.assessor.shelby.tn.us).

### **I have a duplex and the assessor says that it is commercial property. Why is that?**

According to state law, a non-owner occupied duplex is considered commercial property and is assessed at the commercial rate (40% of appraisal). If you live in one side of the duplex, let the assessor's office know so that they can change the property class. They might request a copy of your most recent utility bill as verification that you live in the duplex.

### **What is the difference between the appraisal and the assessment?**

The appraisal is the assessor's opinion of what your property is actually worth. The assessment is the \$ amount that the tax bill is calculated upon. For residential property, the assessment is 25% of the appraisal. For commercial and industrial properties, the assessment is 40% of the appraisal.

**I measured my house myself, and I know that there is no way the assessor's size could be correct. I measured every single room and my house is much smaller than they say it is.**

All properties are measured from the outside, not the inside.

### **When I went to the answer center, they said that they wouldn't change my appraisal. What do I do now?**

You may file an appeal with the Shelby County Board of Equalization (BOE). They will begin accepting appeals on May 1st. If the BOE doesn't reduce it, you may then file an appeal with the State Board of Equalization. We can assist you with this process.

### **This is my second appraisal notice this year, why, and which one is right?**

Until the assessor's office certifies the appraisal in April, any appraisal can be changed, even if for no apparent reason. If you went to the assessor's answer center, the change could be because of that visit. Or, the assessor's could have determined that the values in your whole neighborhood were off and may have adjusted the appraisals accordingly. Until the rolls are certified, assume that the most recent notice is the correct one.

### **For what reasons can I file an appeal?**

State law demands that the property be appropriately classified and described, that the appraisal be no more than what the property is actually worth, and that the appraisal be no higher than the appraisals of similar properties. If any of these three criteria are not met, you may have a valid reason for an appeal.

### **Can they raise my property appraisal?**

Yes, just as they can lower one that is too high, they do have the authority to increase an appraisal that is too low, although they probably won't raise it if it's just a little off. Therefore, don't be frivolous; you might get punished!

### **My roof leaks and needs to be replaced. Can my appraisal be reduced due to needed repairs?**

The assessor's office states that they cannot make adjustments for things that are considered to be general repairs and maintenance to the property. If due to lack of repairs the property is structurally unsound, they may make adjustments in these cases.

### **What if I require additional assistance with my appeal?**

We recommend that you contact a Certified Residential Appraiser if you need additional help assessing the value of your property. A Certified Residential Appraiser can provide you a full assessment of your property for you to submit with your appeal. Chandler Reports can recommend a company to perform a complete real estate appraisal on your property and if appropriate, help you in the appeal process. Call us at (901) 458-6419 for more information on these services.

### **What if I don't agree with the Assessor's measurement of my property?**

For a nominal fee, a Certified Residential Appraiser can measure your property for you.