

Current state of assessment and revaluations in Vermont

The current issue with reappraisal orders is a symptom of a larger issue.

What is your professional perspective on the future of reappraisals in Vermont?

Mass appraisal is built on the amount and quality of data. Currently Vermont's assessment system is based on several micro, town level assessment models. By nature, this leads to poor assessment models and an overall inefficiency in mass appraisal. In order to overcome this hurdle, Vermont will need to consolidate the current micro, town level assessment model into a larger more efficient model.

Pros and Cons of the current system

Pros

-Micro-management of assessment system

Cons

-Micro-management of assessment system

-Inefficiencies in decentralized system

-Excess expense

-Need for unrealistic amount of professionals

What big changes can happen at the state level to support this work?

The state can come together in a single assessment system. This could also be handled at the county level with fourteen independent assessment jurisdictions, although the strength of the current county level of government could be in question.

What obstacles are in place?

-Current state statutes

-Inability to conceptualize change

-Time & money

What have I seen in other states?

Most other states have county level assessment jurisdictions. County level jurisdictions can contain well over one million parcels. These act much like the town level governments of Vermont although much larger in size. Typically, in these states, the state Department of Revenue acts as oversight.

Almost all county level assessment jurisdictions complete in house reappraisals with no contractual valuation work. Contractual work typically comes in the form of system enhancements and not valuations.

Consideration for a new model

As stated above, the clear growth path for the state of Vermont would be to consolidate taxing jurisdictions for streamlining efforts and creating a larger, more accurate, and efficient assessment model. This would solve many current problems associated with assessment in Vermont, as well as save millions of taxpayer dollars annually.