

2011 PROPERTY APPRAISALS FROM TRAVIS COUNTY ARE COMING...

By DICK ALLEN

April Fool's Day is the date for mailing of preliminary 2011 homestead property appraisal notices by the Travis Central Appraisal District (TCAD). Now is the time to review what happened in 2010 and to begin planning how you will respond to the 2011 appraisals.

The 2010 appraisals were not favorable for many Comanche Trail (CT) residents due to increases as high as 460% above 2009 values. A summary of the 2010 changes in land, improvements, and total values is shown in the table below. In the *preliminary* appraisals, 77% of

CT3 properties had increased appraised values, up to 253% above 2009 values and some areas of CT2 had increases as high as 460%. In the final or *certified* appraisals for 2010, 43% of CT properties had an increase in the overall value; 19% had decreases and 38% had no change from 2009. The valuations on improvements artificially went down for many, as TCAD sacrificed valuations on improvements to "protect" their land valuations.

Objections to the 2011 *preliminary* appraisals are addressed through a *protest* process. Note that protests should be based on TCAD errors, unequal appraisal versus comparable properties, or valuation too high, based on market value data. Is it worth the effort? As a result of protesting the *Continued on Page 2*

Summary of 2010 TCAD Appraisal Results

CT Area	Appraised	Comments
C. Bluff	Land	Land values increased 25% vs. 2009 on most lots
C. Pass 1	Land	Land values increased on 8 properties 5 – 78% vs. 2009
	Improvement	Improvement value decreased on 4 properties 1 – 32% vs. 2009
C. Pass 2	Land	Land values stable since 2007
	Total	Total value 2010 vs. 2009: 1 property increased, 3 decreased, all others unchanged
C. Pt 1	Land	Land values stable after last big increase in 2008
	Total	Total value 2010 vs. 2009: 10 properties decreased, 1 increased
C. Pt 2	Land	Land values stable
	Total	Total value 2010 vs. 2009: 2 properties decreased, all others
C. Trail 1	Land	Land values stable, 3 properties decreased 17 – 28% vs. 2009
	Total	Total value decreased on 6 properties by 9 – 28% vs. 2009
C. Trail 2	Land	Land values for CT and LV properties stable @ 85k – 100k
	Land	Land values on 15 Skyline properties increased 124 – 460% in 2010 prelim. Eleven others has increases of 25-180%
C. Trail 3	Land	North-facing - Land values stable after big increase in '07/'08
	Land	South-facing - Land values increased 23 – 253% vs. 2009
C. Village	Land	Land values stable after last big increase in 2008
	Total	Vs. 2009: 5 properties decreased, 5 properties increased
Oasis	Land	Land values increased on 2 properties by over 100% vs. 2009
Bluff 1&2	Total	Total value on 1 property increased by 217% vs. 2009

2011 TCAD APPRAISAL NOTICE

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preliminary appraisals, increased *certified* (final) valuations were applied to only 24% of CT properties, with 76% of the properties having a reduction or no change. Through protests, the impact on CT3 declined - only 33% of properties had *certified* valuation increases, a reduction of 44% from the original number of properties impacted – representing a significant tax saving.

Begin your process by reviewing your 2010 Travis County tax notice. If you protested your 2010 appraisal and were successful, was the lower value properly reflected on your tax notice? Many incorrect values were found after successful protests in 2008 and 2009. If you have a homestead exemption and are over 65, the assessed value used as the basis for LISD taxation can be no higher than the value in the year that you reached 65. Errors were found in 2010. Document all errors and take your complaint to TCAD for resolution. Based on the resolution, any refunds will be made by the County Tax Office.

Next, prepare your protest. Fill out the protest form that is part of the Preliminary Appraisal Notice (check all the reasons). Review all of the data on your “Property Appraisal Information 2011” form for accuracy. Don’t assume that TCAD data is correct. Many errors have been found in lot sizes and the type and dimensions of improvements. Then start gathering data – sales of comparable properties on your street and in surrounding neighborhoods, and review the “comp data” package that TCAD will send you after you submit your protest. The TCAD appraisal roll, listing appraisals for all Travis County properties, can be searched at www.traviscad.org.

Plan your protest carefully based on facts – emotional protests are seldom successful. Your neighbors may be willing to share data and strategies for successful protests. When protest day arrives, relax, exude confidence, this is your day to win! If you feel overwhelmed, there are a number of professional tax protesters who will present your case for a fee. Ask a neighbor or your realtor for references.