

Town of Falmouth

Revaluation Project Fact Sheet



The Town of Falmouth will commence its revaluation of all real property beginning in January 2021 and concluding by August 2022. The results of the revaluation will be applied to November 2022 property tax bills. Under the supervision of Cumberland County Regional Assessing, the Town has contracted with Vision Government Solutions to perform this work.

WHAT IS A REVALUATION?

During a revaluation, all real property in the town is reviewed and assessments are adjusted to their fair market value. A revaluation is the process of conducting the data collection and market analysis necessary to equalize the values of all properties within a municipality for the purpose of a fair distribution of the tax burden.

WHY MUST A REVALUATION BE PERFORMED?

Falmouth's last revaluation occurred in 2009. Meanwhile, constantly changing economic conditions have resulted in the development of inequities. These inequities are remedied by reappraising all properties to reflect 2022 market levels. Because property values fluctuate with market conditions, it is necessary to conduct revaluations to ensure an equitable distribution of the tax burden. Revaluations are performed to return all property values to market levels existing at the time they are conducted.

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www.falmouthme.org/subscribe

WHAT IS MARKET VALUE AND WHO DETERMINES MY PROPERTY VALUE?

Market value is determined by the activity of buying and selling that occurs in the real estate market and in the general economy. The value of your property will be based on an analysis of the entire market for the 12 months prior to April 1, 2022.

The market can generally be defined as you (the homeowner), the person who sold the property to you, and the person willing to buy it from you. It is the appraiser's job to research and analyze the values in a town or neighborhood. Appraisers consider all the factors you and/or a real estate agent consider when determining the price of your home when you put it up for sale. However, the appraiser has specific guidelines to follow. Factors examined in each property include: location, land and improvement sizes, construction quality, improvement age, topography, zoning restrictions, and the utilities present and available to a site. Many other factors—both external and internal to a property are analyzed as well.

HOW IS THIS MASS APPRAISAL PROJECT DIFFERENT FROM A FEE APPRAISAL PROJECT?

A fee appraiser appraises only one property at a time. The appraisal is done for a specific reason, such as purchase, refinance, estate valuation, etc. The date of the appraisal is typically the day it is appraised.

A revaluation uses mass appraisal methods and techniques, meaning many properties are appraised at once. Mass appraisal is typically done for property tax purposes and the effective valuation date for all mass appraisals in Maine is April 1 of the revaluation year, which is 2022 for Falmouth.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING A REVALUATION?

A revaluation project begins with a Data Collection phase. Falmouth will undergo a Full Data Verification Revaluation. Data verification is accomplished through a physical inspection of both the interior and exterior of each property. Improvement dimensions and characteristics are noted.



While the Data Collection phase is going on, appraisers also study property sales and determine where the actual increases and decreases in value are occurring.

This study of property sales occurs over a 12-month period prior to April 1, 2022. Appraisers make comparisons and establish parameters to estimate the value of property that has not been sold. The appraisers then review this collected data and apply the determining factors of the sales analysis to value of each property.

WILL DATA COLLECTORS COME TO MY HOME?

Collection of property data will occur in two phases. In phase 1, beginning in January 2021 and continuing throughout the year, data collectors will inspect the exterior of every property in Falmouth. Residents need not be home for this inspection. Data Collectors will take measurements and walk around the exterior of the property. In Phase 2 of the project, data collectors will ask to see the interior of your home. This phase will begin in July 2021 and continue into 2022. You may accompany them on their tour. The inspection will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes. While it is not mandatory for residents to allow inspectors interior access, the data they are collecting is vitally important to the accuracy and uniformity of the assessments. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Interior inspections will not occur unless an individual 18 years or older is present.

HOW WILL I IDENTIFY A DATA COLLECTOR?

All data collectors working on Falmouth's revaluation project work for Vision Government Solutions of Hudson, Massachusetts. Most of the data collectors conducting Falmouth's revaluation live in Maine and will drive vehicles with Maine license plates. In some cases, however, a data collector may use a vehicle with out-of-state plates. In ALL cases, every data collector vehicle will be marked with the name and logo of Vision Government Solutions. Data Collectors will be dressed in bright yellow vests and will be wearing a lanyard and photo identification badge. They will also have a letter of authorization from the Town of Falmouth. For added security, you can find pictures of Vision data collectors on the Town of Falmouth website at: www.falmouthme.org. If at any time, you are suspicious of an individual asking for entry into your home, you may contact Falmouth Police Department at their non-emergency number (207-781-2300) for verification. Vision appraisers will also provide a schedule of the areas in which they are currently working so you will have advance notice of their arrival in your neighborhood.

Who's Who in the Revaluation Project?

Vision Government Solutions

The Town of Falmouth has contracted with Vision Government Solutions to perform the revaluation.
www.vgsi.com

Cumberland County Regional Assessing

Cumberland County Regional Assessing provides real and personal property assessing services to the Town and will oversee the work of Vision Government Solutions.
www.cumberlandcounty.org/311/Regional-Assessing

HOW WILL SAFETY AND SOCIAL DISTANCING BE MAINTAINED DURING AN APPRAISAL?

Data Collectors have been trained in all CDC recommended health and safety protocols. They will always wear masks and maintain six feet of distance from home owners.

HOW WILL PROPERTY OWNERS BE NOTIFIED OF THE NEW ASSESSMENT?

Property owners will receive individual notices of new assessments by mail during June 2022.

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH OR HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NEW ASSESSMENT?

Property owners can review all new assessed values in order to determine property market and valuation trends. All property owners are given the opportunity to discuss their values with appraisal staff during informal hearings at appointed times to be announced towards the end of the revaluation project (mid-2022).

At individual informal hearings, property owners will have an opportunity to voice concerns and discuss inaccuracies or discrepancies with a qualified appraiser who will review property record cards and explain values. The appraiser will determine whether or not a reinspection and/or valuation change is in order, and the property owner will be notified of the review results.