

Town of Goffstown, Assessing Office
Commonly Asked Questions

What is my assessed value based on?

75:1 How Appraised. – The selectmen shall appraise open space land pursuant to RSA 79-A:5, open space land with conservation restrictions pursuant to RSA 79-B:3, land with discretionary easements pursuant to RSA 79-C:7, residences on commercial or industrial zoned land pursuant to RSA 75:11, earth and excavations pursuant to RSA 72-B, land classified as land under qualifying farm structures pursuant to RSA 79-F, buildings and land appraised under RSA 79-G as qualifying historic buildings, qualifying chartered public school property appraised under RSA 79-H, residential rental property subject to a housing covenant under the low-income housing tax credit program pursuant to RSA 75:1-a, renewable generation facility property subject to a voluntary payment in lieu of taxes agreement under RSA 72:74 as determined under said agreement, telecommunications poles and conduits pursuant to RSA 72:8-c, and **all other taxable property at its market value. Market value means the property's full and true value as the same would be appraised in payment of a just debt due from a solvent debtor.** The selectmen shall receive and consider all evidence that may be submitted to them relative to the value of property, the value of which cannot be determined by personal examination.

Assessments are based on the market value of your property as of a specific date. The most recent update of value was done as of April 1, 2023. For the 2023, 2024 and 2025 tax years, assessments were based on market value as of April 1, 2023.

What is a Cyclical Re-measure and List?

A re-inspection and re-measurement of a portion of properties each year. The intent is to visit every property in Town over a 5 to 7 year period. Properties are re-inspected to verify that the information on the property record card (PRC) is correct. Due to COVID, unless requested by the owner, we are not now requesting entry into residential properties.

What is a Property Record Card (PRC)?

The PRC is your assessment record, sometimes referred to as your Tax Card. While it is referred to as the Tax Card, it is not a Tax Card as it does not show the taxes of the property. The PRC shows property information, such as lot size, building size, number of bedrooms, etc. It also shows the breakdown of the assessed value, a history of assessed values, ownership, and sales information.

Does a Cyclical Re-measure and List (CM&L) change my value?

Only if there is a change in the data. If there is a change in the data, the change in the assessed value is based on the valuation benchmarks that are currently in the Town's assessing system. For most residential properties, data is the physical elements, i.e., the measurements of the building, the physical condition of the property, finish of the basement, number of bathrooms, etc. For commercial, industrial and apartment properties, data can be the size of the site (land needed to support the building), functional and economic obsolescence, land factors, etc.

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I did not do anything to my property last year. Why did the assessed value of my property increase as the result of an inspection?

There are two primary reasons that a CM&L will change a value, even though the property has not changed recently.

- 1) Most properties have now been inspected within the last five to seven years. While nothing has changed recently, there may have been changes since the last inspection.
- 2) There may have been errors made when the last inspection was done.

What are valuation benchmarks?

The Town's mass appraisal computer system is used to estimate assessed values. The computer program uses tables of prices per square foot of various types of buildings, prices per square foot of different sizes of land, size adjustments for buildings, depreciation rates based on year built and condition, valuation points for different types of building elements, etc. These are valuation benchmarks.

What is an assessment update?

An assessment update consists of

- 1) An analysis of current market information, i.e., property sales, building cost data, rental income.
- 2) Creating new valuation benchmarks based on the current market information.
- 3) Applying the new valuation benchmarks to all properties.
- 4) Reviewing and statistically testing the new values.
- 5) Notifying taxpayers of new values.

Property values have increased over the last few years. Does this mean that my assessed value will increase?

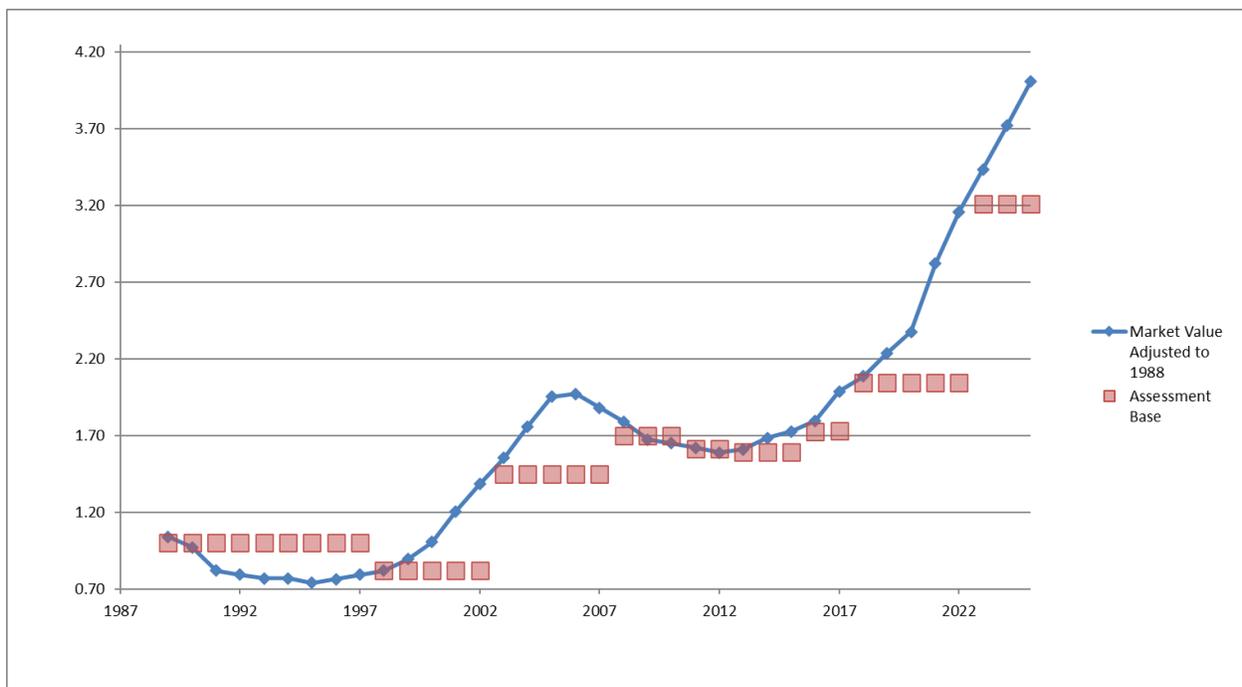
For most properties – **YES**. Property values fell from 2006 to 2011. As a result, most assessments decreased when the Town underwent an assessment update in 2011. In 2011, property values began stabilizing and then began increasing in 2013. Assessments changed very little in the 2013 assessment update (the DRA reviewed the Town's assessments and assessment practices in 2013). In the summer of 2016, the selling prices of residential properties started to rise sharply. The update of assessments in 2016 saw average increases of around 7%, the 2018 assessment update increased assessments by 16%, and the 2023 assessment update increased assessments by 54%. Since the 2023 assessment update, property values have continued to increase at a significant rate. The average selling price of a non-waterfront, single family home in Goffstown was \$486,000 in 2023, \$520,000 in 2024, and \$527,500 from January 2025 to July 2025. However, while the selling prices of homes have been increasing since

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2023, assessments have not changed unless there was a physical change to the property since the last time the property data was reviewed.

Using the Town's median assessment to sales ratio as a guide, the left, vertical side of the chart below indicates the level of market value in comparison to 1988. The 1988 level of market value has been assigned a value of 1.00. The level of market value for subsequent years is based on a comparison to the base of 1988. For example, in 1992 (year shown on the horizontal line, on the bottom), market value had decreased by about 20% and is shown at 0.80. In 2003, property values had increased to a level about 55% higher than it had been in 1988. The red squares indicate the level of assessment as set by an assessment update.

As can be seen by the chart, the 2016 total assessments were more than the 2013 total assessments (about 7%), the 2018 assessments were more than the 2016 assessments (about 16%), and the 2023 assessments are significantly more than the 2018 assessments (about 54%). The median and average selling prices of single-family homes were 54% and 61% higher in 2023 than they were in 2018; therefore, as expected, the assessments of most single-family homes increased by 54% to 61%. As a result, we did see a significant increase in assessed values for the 2023 assessment update.



If my assessment increases, does that mean my taxes will increase?

The 2023 assessment update has increased the overall taxable assessed value of the Town by 54%. The assessments of most residential properties increased by more than 54%. As a result, there will be a shift in property tax burden from non-residential properties to residential properties.

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The assessment determines your portion of the taxes to be collected. If the assessed value of your home increased by more than 54%, then your portion of the taxes to be collected increased; if your assessment increased by 54% your portion remained the same; if your assessment increased by less than 54%, then your portion decreased. Let's say your property assessment increased by 60%. Take $1.60 \div 1.54 = 1.039$; your tax burden will have increased by 3.9%.

Now that does not mean your 2023 taxes increased by only 3.9%. The total amount of taxes to be collected is determined by the Town's budgetary process and Town meeting. The final amount of taxes to be collected in 2024 increased by 7% in 2024 and 10% in 2025. The updated assessments did not impact the total amount of taxes to be collected. It only determined your percentage of the total amount of taxes to be paid. So, in 2023 when the total amount of taxes to be collected increased by 7%, in the above example, the amount of taxes due would increase by 11%.

In its simplest terms, the tax rate is determined by dividing the Total Property Tax Commitment (total amount the Town needs to collect in taxes) by the Local Assessed Value (total taxable assessed value of the Town).

$$\frac{\text{Total Property Tax Commitment}}{\text{Local Assessed Value}}$$

We just underwent an assessment update in 2018. Why did the Town update assessments in 2023?

State law requires the Town to value anew every five years.

RSA 75:8-a Five-Year Valuation. –

The assessors and/or selectmen shall reappraise all real estate within the municipality so that the assessments are at full and true value at least as often as every fifth year, beginning with the later of either of the following:

I. The first year a municipality's assessments were reviewed by the commissioner of the department of revenue administration pursuant to RSA 21-J:3, XXVI and the municipality's assessments were determined to be in accordance with RSA 75:1; or

II. The municipality conducted a full revaluation monitored by the department of revenue administration pursuant to RSA 21-J:11, II, provided that the full revaluation was effective on or after April 1, 1999.

The DRA's review of the Town's assessments and assessment practices started in 2003 and is scheduled for every five years after that, i.e., 2008, 2013, 2018, 2023, etc. The next required assessment update will be in the year 2028.

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I just had my house appraised for less than my assessment. Am I eligible for an abatement?

You would be eligible to **file** an abatement. An appraisal, or other third-party opinion of value, is always a good starting point to consider filing an abatement. If you have questions, talk to the Town's Assessor. If you believe that your property is over-assessed, file an abatement (after the second bill is received and no later than March 1st) with a copy of the appraisal included. Please note that abatements cannot be filed electronically. As with all filed abatements, it will be reviewed, and you will receive a written response. Just be aware that an appraisal is one individual's opinion; it does not guarantee a reduction in assessed value.

Do I need to have an appraisal in order to file an abatement?

No. All you need to file an abatement is "good cause shown."

Per the BTLA's abatement application form: "RSA 76:16 provides that an abatement may be granted for good cause shown. 'Good cause' generally means:

- 1) establishing an assessment is disproportionate to market value and the municipality's level of assessment; or
- 2) establishing poverty and inability to pay the tax."

"My taxes increased" or "my assessment increased" would typically not be considered as good cause shown.

How do I file an abatement?

An abatement form can be obtained at the Assessor's Office or from the following site: <https://www.btla.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt601/files/inline-documents/sonh/abatement.pdf>. It is not required to use the abatement form; however, it is recommended. At a minimum, a request for abatement must include the property for which an abatement is sought, the reasons that an abatement is sought, and be signed by the owner of the property. An application for abatement must be received **after** the second tax bill (October or November) has been sent and **no later than** March 1st.

What is the DRA?

The Department of Revenue Administration. The Property Appraisal Division monitors the assessing function and certifies assessors. Their website is: <https://www.revenue.nh.gov/>.

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What is the BTLA?

The Board of Tax and Land Appeals is an alternative forum for tax cases. “The BTLA consists of three full-time board members, appointed by the supreme court, who are ‘learned and experienced in questions of taxation or of real estate valuation and appraisal.’”

Their website is: <https://www.btla.nh.gov/>.