

Annual Property Assessment Notices

Council Meeting - November 21, 2023

Report Purpose

- To inform Council of a 2024 change in when annual Property Assessment Notices will be sent to residential property owners
- To describe the advantages of making this change
- To advise Council on our communications strategy

Legislative Requirements

- Section 308 and 310 of the Municipal Government Act stipulate that, annually, an Assessment Notice must be prepared for all assessed property and that Assessment Notices must be sent no later than July 1 of each year
- Section 333 of the Municipal Government Act stipulates that, annually, a Tax Notice be prepared for all taxable property and sent to the taxpayers

Legislative Requirements

- Assessment Notices and Tax Notices are not the same:
 - Assessment Notices
 - capture information on the Assessment Roll including assessed person, assessment class and the assessed value (i.e. market value)
 - provide an opportunity to review your property assessment
 - provide a 60-day complaint period to the Assessment Review Board
 - Tax Notices
 - capture information on the Tax Roll including the taxpayer, tax rates and taxes imposed
 - provide a 30 plus day period for payment

Current and Future State

Commercial Property (2,000 accounts)		
Month	Current State	Future State (no change)
January	Assessment Notice	Assessment Notice
May	Tax Notice	Tax Notice

Residential Property (38,000 accounts)		
Month	Current State	Future State
January	No Notice	Assessment Notice
May	Assessment and Tax Notice (combined)	Tax Notice

Future State Advantages

- The new process will benefit residential property owners in several ways. They will:
 - Receive their assessment notice four months earlier than before
 - Have more time to review their assessment before tax notices are sent in May
 - Know that their assessment values are separate from taxation
 - See that their assessment notices reflect the market valuation date more accurately
 - Have an opportunity for financial planning and/or to enrol in the Tax Instalment Payment Plan

Future State Advantages

- Additionally, the new process will:
 - Manage assessment revisions and review board decisions before the annual tax rate bylaw
 - Apply a consistent approach for both commercial and residential properties
 - Follow the same approach as other regional municipalities
 - Align with the recent launch of Tempest taxation software, which will enable property owners to register on the 'My Accounts' portal

Future State Disadvantages

- Change management and customer communications required for first year of implementation
- Additional cost related to printing, postage and inserts

Communications

- An insert will be included with all Assessment Notices sent in January/February of 2024
- Social media
- Newspaper advertising
- County website

Change Management

- Department staff will be available for resident inquiries
- Tax Calculator Tool – provides estimated 2024 taxes
- 60-day Assessment Review Board complaint period
- Five months advance notice (prior to tax due deadline)

Questions