

Laketon Township

Property Values: How they increase over time & How to appeal them to the March Board of Review

Every year, we see property values increase, but may not understand how or why. In 1994, an amendment to the property tax law, known as Proposal A, was passed by a vote of the people of this state. Since then every property has 2 important values; the State Equalized Value or SEV and the Taxable Value or TV. Each of these values are determined or controlled by different factors and calculations, each of which is summarized as simply as possible below.

The changes each year to the SEV (which should represent 50% of the true cash value of a property) are determined by sales studies over a prescribed period of time (either a one year or two year period). Sales studies compare the sale prices of similar properties, in similar neighborhoods in the area which are then equalized (or averaged) to determine if the SEV values should go up, down, or stay the same each year and by how much.

The TV is a value, whose growth is limited by what is known as a “cap”. The change in a capped TV is determined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), often referred to as the rate of inflation. The State Dept. of Treasury puts out a bulletin each year to inform every municipality what the CPI is that must be applied to the TV of every property, statewide, within the limits of Proposal A: the CPI or 5%, whichever is less; until the TV is the same as the SEV. The TV can be equal to but never more than the SEV. The TV is the value used to calculate tax bills. *Note: if a property's TV is the same as or close to the SEV and the increase prescribed by the CPI would cause it to be more than the SEV, the increase in the TV stops at a value equal to the SEV.*

There are a few other factors that can affect these basic rules; a couple of common factors are:

- A Transfer of Ownership - the year after a transfer of ownership, the “cap” comes off the TV and the TV goes up and is the same as the SEV, then is recapped for the new owner at that value and the process starts over again. This can sometimes result in a significant increase in property taxes the year after it is transferred to a new owner, what is sometimes referred to as the “bump up tax”.
- Changes to the amenities of the property - whenever improvements (additions, decks, garages, pools etc) are made to a property, the value of that improvement is added to the SEV and the TV, in addition to the prescribed changes to the TV and SEV summarized above. The reverse happens any time amenities (things of value) are removed from a property (ex. If a deck, shed or outbuilding is demolished and removed), the value of the removed amenity is removed from both the SEV and TV.

For 2024, the CPI to be applied to the Taxable Values of properties all across the State of Michigan will be limited to the maximum 5% allowed by law, since the actual CPI is 5.1% . The taxable value increase was limited to the maximum 5% in 2023 as well when the CPI was a whopping 7.9% !

- The March Board of Review each year is for property owners and taxpayers to appeal the proposed values of their property if they feel the values DO NOT accurately reflect approximately 50% of the true cash value of the property. This is THE ONLY time the proposed values can be appealed each year. Appealing to the March Board of Review is required by State Law to reserve your right (if needed) to appeal to the State Tax Tribunal. The Board of Review meeting dates are listed on your 2024 Annual Assessment Notice. If, after reviewing your annual assessment notice, you have any questions please feel free to call Laketon Township (231-744-2454) to speak to the assessing department or call to make an appointment with the Board of Review per the instructions on the assessment notice.

TID BITS

- **2024 Election Information:** Presidential Primary Election: Tuesday 2/27/2024— Call the Clerk’s Office (231-744-2454) if you have questions, need an absentee voter ballot or have any other election/voting related issues.
August Primary Election— Tuesday 08/06/2024.
General Election—Tuesday 11/5/2024.
Any questions, please call the Clerk’s Office.
- **Dog Licenses:** Muskegon County Dog Licenses can be purchased all year at Laketon Twp Hall—all dogs are required by law to be licensed when they turn 4 months old and get their first rabies vaccination shot OR within 30 days of acquiring ownership if they over 4 months old. Proof of rabies vaccination shot required!
- **Dogs and Township Parks:** Dogs MUST be on an adequate leash of no more than ten (10) feet in length— Dogs ARE NOT permitted on sports fields, in dug-outs, or on playgrounds. Dog droppings MUST be picked up AND disposed of in proper trash cans. Thanks!
- **NON-Motorized Trails:** The sidewalks and bike paths in Laketon Township do not allow snowmobiles, motorcycles, quads/4 wheelers or ATV’s of any kind. Thank you for respecting the rules for the safety of everyone using these paths.
- **Projects & Permits:** If you are planning any home improvement projects; roofing, siding, windows, additions, renovations, fences, pools, decks, outbuildings etc—be sure to check and see if you need a permit BEFORE you get started.



Senior Safety Tips

Laketon Township contracts with Muskegon Charter Township Fire Department for fire protection services. Below are some safety tips for senior citizens; and while they were devised with senior citizens in mind—they could be helpful for everyone.

In the event of an emergency, always call 911!

Keep It Low

Sleep on the ground floor level to make emergency escape easier!

Sound the Alarm

Make sure your smoke alarms are installed in sleeping areas and are working properly!

Do the Drill

Practice what you would do if there was an emergency. Make a plan, and practice!!

Open Up

Make sure all of your doors and windows are able to open!

Stay Connected

Keep a telephone nearby, and know who to call in case of an emergency!

Many Thanks!

- Laketon Township extends a sincere Thank You to the Muskegon Northside Lions Club for their assistance again this year with keeping the bike path and sidewalks swept and clear.
- To the residents that live along the bike paths and sidewalks—Thank you to you as well for helping keep the paths in front of your homes clean and clear from debris and from snow and ice piles in the winter. These paths and sidewalks are used in the winter to get kids to and from school as well as recreation and are an important community amenity.
- Thank you to the residents with fire hydrants in their yards—your help in keeping them clear of ice and snow in the winter is very much appreciated. Being able to quickly access a fire hydrant in a fire emergency can be vital to saving lives and property.
- Thank You to all of Laketon Township for being an amazing community—it benefits everyone of us that live or work here—as well as those who vacation here.

THANK YOU ALL!