



2016 Annual Report

Michael Cedars, Chief Appraiser

Orange County Appraisal District— PO Box 457 Orange, Texas 77631



Mission Statement

The mission of the Orange County Appraisal District is to discover, list and appraise all property located within the boundaries of the district in an accurate, ethical and impartial manner in an effort to estimate the market value of each property and achieve uniformity and equity between classes of properties. This will be accomplished by maintaining the highest standards in appraisal practices and law, guided by the goals of providing quality service to the taxpayers and taxing entities and by developing personnel who are professional and knowledgeable.



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From the Chief Appraiser

It is an honor to once again report on the activities of the Orange County Appraisal District and our ongoing commitment to excellence. In 2016, the goal of the district was to focus on improving the experiences of our customers, the property owners and taxing entities. This 2016 Annual report will highlight the results and some of the significant accomplishments made this year.

In an effort to provide the best quality service, the district has increased its focus to provide our customers with more available data on-line. This is being partially accomplished through the development of a new OCAD website (www.orangecad.net). The new website provides users with access to current and historical appraisal information, map information (including current aerial photography), tax rates and exemption information for all taxing entities, frequently asked questions, the ability to file an appeal on-line, and many other items pertaining to the district and its operations.

The district has also developed an automated process for scheduling, tracking and hearing appeals in a more efficient manner using computer technology. Using these systems, the district is able to track each contact (phone, on-line or in-person) as well as monitor the amount of time the property owner has to spend in each phase of the appeal, allowing the district to look for ways to improve the efficiency and the property owner's experience.

In an attempt to more efficiently perform the process of discovering and appraising real and personal property, the district has acquired the "Mobile Office" appraisal program developed by Tyler Technologies. This technology has allowed the district's appraisers to use tablet computers in the "field" to inspect and measure property and provides all of the appraisal, map and aerial photography on one piece of equipment. The district also purchased laser measuring devices (Disto) which allows the appraiser to measure any new or changed structures without the need for an assistant and in shorter amount of time.

It is the belief of management and the Board of Directors that by using these technologies we are able to perform our appraisal tasks with fewer personnel and with a higher degree of accuracy.

Looking forward, it is our intention to continue to look for ways to be more helpful and efficient in all of our tasks and responsibilities.

Sincerely,

Michael (Mike) Cedars, RPA
Chief Appraiser



Governance

Board of Directors

The Orange County Appraisal District is governed by a 5 member board of directors who are elected by the incorporated cities and towns, the school districts, the county and if entitled to vote, the conservation and reclamation districts that participate in the District.

To be eligible to serve on the Board of Directors for OCAD, a person must have resided within the boundaries of the county for at least two years prior to their appointment. Their terms are not staggered and there are no legal limits to the number of terms a board member can serve.

Board of Directors

Tim Schossow – Chairman

Hughie Allen – Vice Chairman

Laura Floyd – Secretary

Lynda Gunstream - Member

Tim Andrews - Member

Appraisal Review Board

The Orange County Appraisal Review Board consists of five members appointed by the Board of Directors of the Orange County Appraisal District. Members of the Appraisal Review Board (ARB) serve two-year staggered terms and are limited by law to serving three consecutive two-year terms. To be eligible to serve on the ARB, an individual must be a resident of the district and must have resided in the district for at least two years. Board members are also required to attend annual training classes to be eligible to serve in any given year.

The responsibilities of the appraisal review board include:

- Determining protests initiated by property owners;
- Determining challenges initiated by taxing units;
- Correcting clerical errors in the appraisal records and the appraisal rolls;
- Acting on motions to correct appraisal rolls under Section 25.25 of the Property Tax Code;
- Determining whether exemptions and special appraisals are improperly granted; and
- Taking other actions or making other determinations authorized by the Property Tax Code.



Agricultural Advisory Board

The Agricultural Advisory Board for OCAD is a five member board appointed by the Chief Appraiser with the advice and consent of the Board of Directors. The responsibility of the Agricultural Advisory Board is to advise the Chief Appraiser on the valuation and use of land that may be designated for open-space agricultural or timber land within the District and to assist in determining typical practices and standards used in various farming operations. This board serves at the will of the Chief Appraiser.

Agricultural Advisory Board Members

Harry Corbett

James A. Jenkins

Royce Scales

Robert Armstrong

Dan Harris





Taxing Jurisdictions Served by OCAD

The Orange County Appraisal District is responsible for appraising all properties for each taxing units that have territory located within the 380 square miles of Orange County. The list of taxing entities with territory in the appraisal district includes:

- Orange County
- Orange County Lateral Road
- Orange County Navigation and Port District
- Orange County Drainage District
- Bridge City ISD
- Little Cypress-Mauriceville CISD
- Orangefield ISD
- Vidor ISD
- West Orange-Cove CISD
- City of Orange
- City of Bridge City
- City of Pinehurst
- City of Vidor
- City of West Orange
- City of Pine Forest
- City of Rose City
- City of Port Arthur (split with Jefferson CAD)
- Emergency Service District #1
- Emergency Service District #2
- Emergency Service District #3
- Emergency Service District #4
- Water Control and Improvement District #1

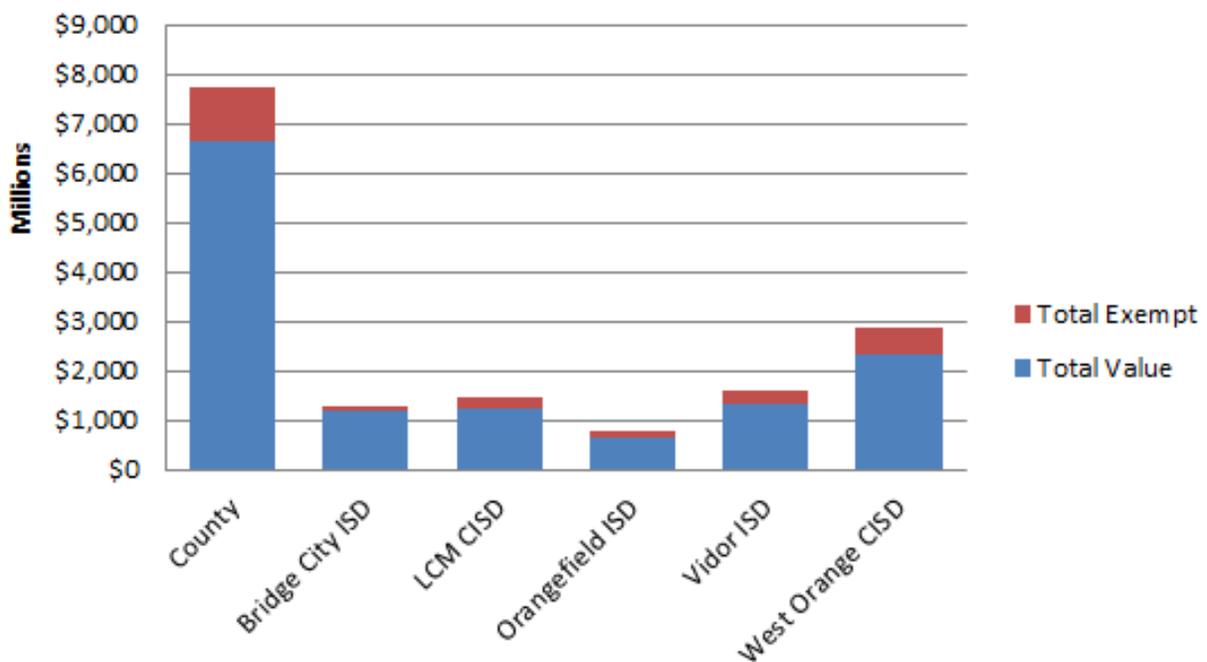




General Statistics

| Appraisal Year | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Financial Budget | 1,469,974 | 1,577,923 | 1,662,464 | 1,729,237 |
| Market Value | \$6,422,230,691 | \$6,663,984,482 | \$6,908,899,343 | \$7,134,230,058 |
| Number of Parcels in the County | 72,070 | 74,119 | 75,248 | 72,242 |
| Residential | 31,657 | 32,286 | 33,145 | 33,815 |
| Commercial | 2,417 | 2,439 | 2,468 | 2,516 |
| Business Personal Property | 5,038 | 5,240 | 5,563 | 5,722 |
| Land | 9,046 | 8,690 | 8,480 | 8,512 |
| Minerals | 13,958 | 15,816 | 16,582 | 13,370 |
| Exempt | 1,395 | 1,412 | 1,401 | 1,406 |
| Number of Personnel | 17 | 17 | 18 | 18 |

Total Market Loss to Exemptions

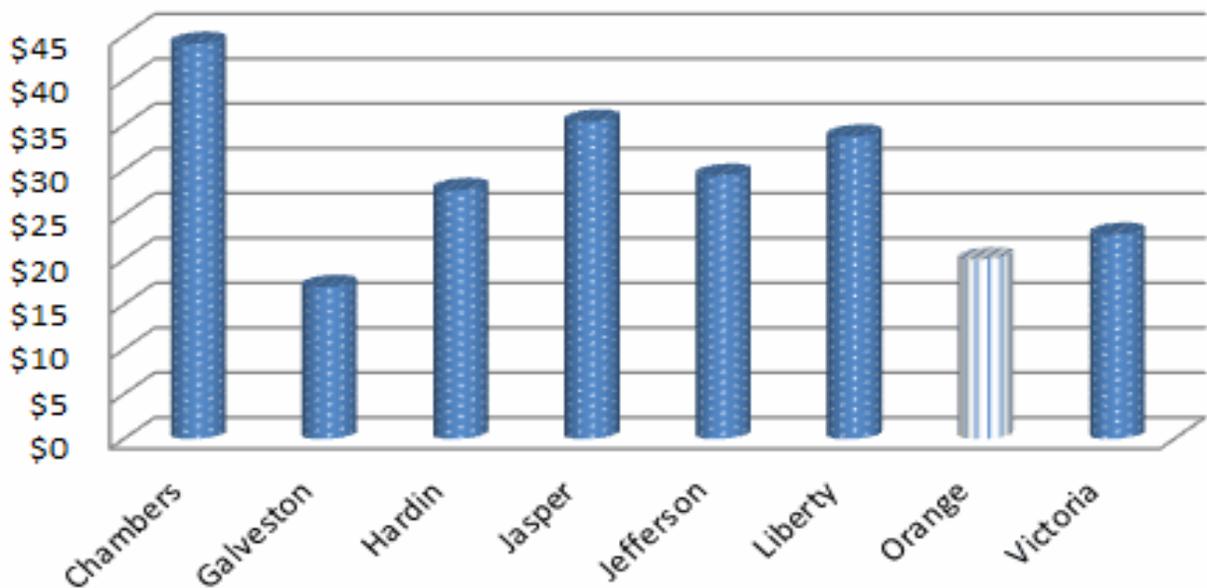




Appraisal District Comparative (Based of 2015 Data)

| | Budget | Population | \$ / Person | Parcels | \$ / Parcel | Empl | Parcels/Empl |
|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|---------|-------------|------|--------------|
| Orange | 1,662,464 | 82,957 | \$20.04 | 78,211 | \$21.26 | 18 | 4345 |
| Chambers | 1,621,800 | 36,812 | \$44.06 | 39,330 | \$40.24 | 10 | 3933 |
| Galveston | 5,202,000 | 306,782 | \$16.96 | 180,947 | \$27.24 | 46 | 3934 |
| Hardin | 1,538,189 | 55,417 | \$27.76 | 62,519 | \$24.02 | 15 | 4168 |
| Jefferson | 7,407,028 | 252,358 | \$29.35 | 152,757 | \$48.80 | 44 | 3471 |
| Jasper | 1,261,500 | 35,649 | \$35.39 | 43,388 | \$27.20 | 16 | 2711 |
| Liberty | 2,594,360 | 76,907 | \$33.73 | 110,229 | \$23.28 | 32 | 3447 |
| Victoria | 2,050,807 | 90,028 | \$22.78 | 59,465 | \$32.58 | 23 | 2585 |

2015 Appraisal District Cost Per Population





2016 Ratio Study Final Totals

COUNTY

| Description | # of sales | Low Ratio | High Ratio | Median | Mean | W. Mean | COD |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------|---------|---------|-------|
| All | 472 | 77.24% | 117.61% | 96.95% | 96.94% | 96.07% | 5.86 |
| Class 1 | 11 | 84.05% | 183.06% | 96.35% | 108.78% | 100.95% | 17.83 |
| Class 2 | 47 | 76.07% | 123.22% | 95.90% | 96.54% | 95.36% | 7.42 |
| Class 3 | 258 | 79.55% | 116.71% | 96.96% | 97.37% | 96.64% | 5.58 |
| Class 4 | 107 | 81.34% | 116.08% | 97.69% | 97.14% | 96.61% | 5.32 |
| Class 5 | 56 | 78.25% | 111.83% | 96.89% | 95.96% | 94.92% | 6.57 |
| Class 6 | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0 |

BCISD

| Description | # of sales | Low Ratio | High Ratio | Median | Mean | W. Mean | COD |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------|--------|---------|------|
| All | 137 | 79.30% | 110.84% | 96.08% | 95.94% | 95.24% | 5.22 |
| Class 1 | 0 | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0 |
| Class 2 | 9 | 89.04% | 102.06% | 96.95% | 96.97% | 97.65% | 4.23 |
| Class 3 | 76 | 83.27% | 108.76% | 95.35% | 95.92% | 95.64% | 4.5 |
| Class 4 | 34 | 69.95% | 116.08% | 96.89% | 95.47% | 94.25% | 7.66 |
| Class 5 | 22 | 79.30% | 109.92% | 94.21% | 94.87% | 93.72% | 5.83 |

OFISD

| Description | # of sales | Low Ratio | High Ratio | Median | Mean | W. Mean | COD |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| All | 50 | 76.07% | 113.79% | 96.37% | 95.35% | 94.47% | 7.63 |
| Class 1 | 1 | 183.06% | 183.06% | 183.06% | 183.06% | 183.06% | 0 |
| Class 2 | 3 | 76.07% | 113.79% | 108.67% | 99.51% | 101.07% | 11.57 |
| Class 3 | 17 | 80.45% | 113.79% | 96.24% | 96.66% | 96.63% | 8.45 |
| Class 4 | 10 | 86.57% | 103.35% | 94.34% | 94.43% | 93.89% | 4.04 |
| Class 5 | 21 | 78.25% | 107.84% | 97.15% | 95.01% | 94.11% | 7.58 |

3% Neighborhood adj
made to Orangefield ISD

LCMISD

| Description | # of sales | Low Ratio | High Ratio | Median | Mean | W. Mean | COD |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| All | 98 | 79.55% | 112.23% | 96.94% | 96.08% | 95.70% | 5.79 |
| Class 1 | 2 | 91.80% | 96.35% | 94.08% | 94.07% | 93.59% | 2.42 |
| Class 2 | 9 | 83.19% | 146.91% | 95.90% | 100.79% | 100.65% | 12.72 |
| Class 3 | 50 | 79.55% | 112.23% | 96.70% | 96.15% | 94.98% | 5.85 |
| Class 4 | 32 | 78.12% | 111.98% | 97.04% | 95.25% | 95.17% | 5.75 |
| Class 5 | 10 | 81.87% | 117.61% | 101.27% | 101.60% | 99.86% | 7.37 |

VISD

| Description | # of sales | Low Ratio | High Ratio | Median | Mean | W. Mean | COD |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|--------|---------|---------|-------|
| All | 109 | 82.19% | 116.71% | 96.64% | 97.25% | 96.52% | 5.47 |
| Class 1 | 5 | 90.28% | 413.75% | 94.99% | 160.76% | 107.91% | 71.43 |
| Class 2 | 15 | 82.19% | 105.31% | 95.42% | 94.15% | 92.81% | 5.85 |
| Class 3 | 67 | 84.18% | 116.71% | 96.64% | 97.48% | 96.61% | 5.7 |
| Class 4 | 22 | 87.51% | 107.45% | 98.46% | 98.68% | 97.48% | 4.14 |
| Class 5 | 1 | 95.83% | 95.83% | 95.83% | 95.83% | 95.83% | 0 |

3% Neighborhood adj
made to Vidor ISD

WOCISD

| Description | # of sales | Low Ratio | High Ratio | Median | Mean | W. Mean | COD |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------|---------|---------|-------|
| All | 77 | 81.92% | 123.72% | 99.57% | 100.89% | 100.62% | 5.69 |
| Class 1 | 4 | 84.05% | 146.22% | 102.51% | 108.82% | 98.74% | 15.18 |
| Class 2 | 13 | 81.92% | 128.12% | 98.74% | 101.66% | 100.75% | 10.22 |
| Class 3 | 48 | 87.63% | 118.14% | 99.70% | 101.20% | 100.72% | 4.97 |
| Class 4 | 12 | 92.00% | 109.36% | 99.72% | 100.85% | 100.62% | 3.97 |
| Class 5 | 3 | 96.62% | 101.55% | 99.19% | 99.12% | 98.65% | 1.66 |

Financial Report

The financial results for 2016 reflect a focus of conservative fiscal stewardship and utilization of the District's financial and personnel resources. The finances of the District are presented in the annual budget and the audited financial statements each year.

Budget

The District's budget must be prepared and presented to the Board of Directors and participating entities by June 15 of each year. The board of Directors holds at least one public hearing required to be held by September and then adopted by September 15th. The budget outlines the objectives as set out by the chief appraiser and approved by the Board of Directors and describes the operating and maintenance expenditures by category, personnel breakdown showing staffing levels and salary ranges as well as a detailed schedule of capitalized equipment to be purchased.

Audited Financial Statements

The financial statements of the district are audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.

The Board of Directors reviews the budget with the chief appraiser and appropriate district staff for any necessary revisions or recommendations. The Board of Directors reviews the financial audit with the District's auditor to understand any comments contained in the auditor's findings and to receive any recommendations in relation to the financial operations. For 2016, the financial audit was considered "clean" with no recommendations.





Appraisal Process

The 2016 appraisal year began in August of 2015. The district utilized the efforts of six real property and one personal property appraisers as well as the supervision of the Deputy Chief Appraiser. For 2016, the district utilized aerial photographs as well as the district's Geographic Information System software as well as field inspections in the discovery process. In the field the appraisers utilized the mobile office software on their tablet computers. This allowed them to work more efficiently. The Mobile Office software combines everything into one package. With the aerial photography and the maps being imbedded in the system the appraiser can see the sketches over the aerials. This allows the appraisers to find any additions or removal of improvements easier. The appraiser can then enter the account and make any changes that are necessary. The appraiser is even able to georeferenced a picture to the account to easily identify the improvements. By utilizing this technology it has made the appraisals more accurate while speeding up the appraisal process.

Personal property (furniture, fixtures, machinery, equipment and inventory) at local businesses was inspected via on-site visits as necessary. These visits as well as meetings with business owners included discussions concerning issues affecting various types of businesses and the personal property of those businesses. Discussions also allowed the appraiser to explain the rendition process and to answer any questions the taxpayer may have. The on-site inspections allowed the appraiser to determine the quality, quantity, and condition of the personal property.

For 2016, the Orange County Appraisal District appraisers were responsible for appraising approximately 56,000 property accounts. This amounted to an average of nearly 10,000 accounts per appraiser.



CALENDAR OF KEY EVENTS 2016-2017

REAL PROPERTY

| | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | Apr. | May | Jun. | Jul. | Aug. |
|--|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|
| Land Analysis | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sales Collection & Valuation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Income & Expense Collection & Validation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Re-inspection (Onsite and/or Pictometry) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| New Construction / Discovery | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Permits | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mobile Home Parks | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Model Calibration | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Final Value Review | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jurisdiction Estimates | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Notices Mailed | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Current Year Hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prior Year Hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rolls Certified | | | | | | | | | | | | |

INDUSTRIAL REAL & PERSONAL, UTILITES & MINERALS

| | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | Apr. | May | Jun. | Jul. | Aug. |
|---|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|
| Negotiate Appraisal Contractor Contract | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Land Analysis | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Re-inspection / Discovery | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Deliver Estimates of Value | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Industrial Values Delivered | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mineral Lease Information Delivered | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mineral Changes Made | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Industrial Notices Mailed (by Contractor) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mineral Notices Mailed (by Contractor) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Current Year Hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Prior Year Hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rolls Certified | | | | | | | | | | | | |

LOCAL PERSONAL PROPERTY

| | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | Apr. | May | Jun. | Jul. | Aug. |
|--|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|
| Personal Property Inspections | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Renditions Mailed | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rendition Processing | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Finish Processing Renditions with Extentions | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Testing Personal Property Schedules | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VIT Monthly Reports | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VIT Declarations | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Notices Mailed | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Current Year Hearings | | | | | | | | | | | | |



Exemption Data

The Orange County Appraisal District is responsible for the administration of all property tax exemptions granted countywide as described in Chapter 11 of the Property Tax Code. The most common exemptions granted by the taxing units in Orange County pertain to homesteads. These exemptions include mandated homestead exemptions, optional homestead exemptions, over-65 exemptions, disability exemptions as defined by the Texas constitution, optional homestead exemptions as determined by each entity, Over-65 exemptions, disability exemptions, disabled veteran exemptions and 100% disabled veteran exemptions. Other exemptions administered by the district include pollution control exemptions, Freeport exemptions, charitable organizations, religious organizations, public property and other miscellaneous exemptions.

All other homestead related exemptions are reviewed periodically to ensure that proper documentation is contained in each file and if not, new documentation is required. The district also has acquired information from the various cities to determine if the owners of the property receiving the homestead exemption are the same as the person being billed for utilities. If not, further investigation is made to see if the property is being rented or occupied by someone other than the owner.

The appraisal district currently has two employees who have dual rolls of exemption clerk and receptionist. These employees have been trained to be courteous to our customers and to be knowledgeable and fair in their processing of all exemptions. They also understand that their duty is to follow the Property Tax Code to grant any exemptions properly applied for and to deny any that do not qualify.

As you can see, all entities in Orange County grant the various homestead related exemptions mandated by law. The County of Orange, most of the schools and all of the cities also grant the optional percentage exemptions and allow for the over-65 and disability tax ceiling (freeze) as allowed by the Property Tax Code. The tax ceilings prohibit increased taxes on the homestead on existing improvements. Significant new structures or additions to existing improvements will cause the ceiling to be recalculated for the subsequent tax year.

The following charts/graphs show the effect of these exemptions as they relate to the total value eligible for homestead.





ORANGE COUNTY 2016 TAX RATE AND EXEMPTION CHART

| TAXING ENTITY | | TAX RATE per \$100 | HOMESTEAD | | OVER 65 | | DISABILITY | | |
|------------------------|---|---|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| | | | Local Option | STATE MANDATED | Local Option | STATE MANDATED | Local Option | STATE MANDATED | |
| COUNTY WIDE | CO X40 COUNTY | .54120 | 20% | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | |
| | FM L03 F/M | .00280 | 20% | 3,000 | 25,000 | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | |
| | TOTAL COUNTY RATE | | 0.54400 | | | | | | |
| | DR D02 DRAIN | .11126 | 20% | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | |
| | PORT P01 PORT | .00756 | 20% | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | |
| | CITY | CBC C11 BRIDGE CITY | .52000 | 20% | 0 | 22,000 | 0 | 22,000 | 0 |
| COR C12 ORANGE | | .70940 | 20% | 0 | 15,000 | 0 | 15,000 | 0 | |
| CPF C17 PINE FOREST | | .13127 | 20% | 0 | 20,000 | 0 | 20,000 | 0 | |
| CPH C18 PINEHURST | | .69799 | 20% | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | |
| CPA C13 PORT ARTHUR | | .79200 | 20% | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | 25,000 | 0 | |
| CRC C19 ROSE CITY | | .37526 | 20% | 0 | 5,000 | 0 | 5,000 | 0 | |
| CVI C14 VIDOR | | .72500 | 20% | 0 | 15,000 | 0 | 15,000 | 0 | |
| CWO C15 WEST ORANGE | | .42500 | 20% | 0 | 17,000 | 0 | 17,000 | 0 | |
| SPECIAL DIST. | | E1VI E24 EMERGENCY SERV. DIST. #1 (ESD#1) | .10000 | NONE | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 | 0 |
| | | E2BC E21 EMERGENCY SERV. DIST. #2 (ESD#2) | .09667 | NONE | 0 | 15,000 | 0 | 15,000 | 0 |
| | | F3LC C22 EMERGENCY SERV. DIST. #3 (ESD#3) | .06000 | NONE | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 5,000 | 0 |
| | | F4MM E23 EMERGENCY SERV. DIST. #4 (ESD#4) | .03000 | NONE | 0 | 5,000 | 0 | 5,000 | 0 |
| | | W1VI W34 WATER CONTROL & IMP. DIST #1 (WCID#1) | .38885 | NONE | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 5,000 | 0 |
| | SBC S01 BRIDGE CITY I.S.D. | 1.18000 | NONE | 25,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | NONE | 10,000 | |
| | SLC S02 LITTLE CYPRESS-MAURICEVILLE C.I.S.D. | 1.43000 | 15% | 25,000 | NONE | 10,000 | NONE | 10,000 | |
| SCHOOL | SOF S03 ORANGEFIELD I.S.D. | 1.29575 | 20% | 25,000 | NONE | 10,000 | NONE | 10,000 | |
| | SVI S04 VIDOR I.S.D. | 1.21652 | 15% | 25,000 | NONE | 10,000 | NONE | 10,000 | |
| | SWO S05 WEST ORANGE-COVE C.I.S.D. | 1.42500 | 20% | 25,000 | NONE | 10,000 | NONE | 10,000 | |



Notice and Equalization Process

In April 2016, the Orange County Appraisal District mailed all real property appraisal notices to the taxpayers of Orange County. Industrial, mineral and personal property notices were mailed in May of 2016. The appeal deadline for real property was May 31st. Due to the fact that personal property is given until April 15 to file their renditions and that a mandatory extension of 30 days and a "good cause" extension of an additional 15 days are available, personal property notices cannot be mailed until after May 15. All of the notice deadlines set by the property tax code were met by the District.

The District began hearing informal appeals as soon as real property notices were mailed. Informal appeals allow the property owner an opportunity to meet with an appraisal district appraiser and discuss the appraisal on their property. The owner is given an opportunity to present evidence to the appraiser and to see how their property was appraised. If an error is discovered or if evidence is presented that changes the opinion of value, the appraiser has the ability to make a change to the appraisal. If an agreement is reached between the appraiser and the property owner, a Settlement Waiver of Protest is signed and the appeal process is complete. If an agreement is not reached, a formal appeal is signed and the property owner is scheduled for a hearing with the Appraisal Review Board.

Orange County Appraisal District began providing on-line appraisal appeals on real property accounts beginning in 2013. Using this process, the taxpayer is given an opportunity to file a protest and present evidence to the District for review. The information is then considered and an offer is made to settle or the taxpayer is informed that no change will be made and the account will be scheduled for a formal hearing with the Appraisal Review Board. When compared with the informal hearing process, the results were very similar but did allow the taxpayer a method to be heard without having to physically come to the District's office. For 2016 the district had 157 on-line protests.

The Orange County Appraisal Review Board (ARB) is a quasi-judicial body appointed by the Orange County Appraisal District Board of Directors. Members are charged with the function of providing an impartial review of the appraisal records prepared by the District. The ARB is empowered to hear taxpayer appeals through scheduled hearings for taxpayers who dispute the appraised value, the equality of their appraisal with similar properties, the application of exemptions and special appraisals and any other action of the District that may affect taxpayer liability. The ARB members do not work for the appraisal district but rather, arbitrate between the taxpayer and the District. The five members of the ARB are appointed by the District's Board of Directors and serve two year terms.

**The 2016 Appraisal Review Board Members consisted of the following members:**

James Sears
 Jerry Windham
 John Martin
 Weldon Townsend
 Natalie Dishon

Formal appeals for tax year 2016 began on May 24, 2016. A total of 10 hearing days were scheduled and 1146 formal protests were placed on the ARB calendar to be heard. The results of the 2016 appeals process are as follows:

| Results | Formal | Informal | Online | Total |
|-----------------------|--------|----------|--------|-------|
| Closed to open formal | 0 | 232 | 8 | 240 |
| Cancelled | 6 | 1 | 8 | 15 |
| Clerical error | 3 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Appeal denied | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| No Action | 7 | 280 | 90 | 377 |
| No Show | 341 | 0 | 0 | 341 |
| Withdrew | 226 | 61 | 0 | 287 |
| CAD No Change/SW | 62 | 170 | 0 | 232 |
| CAD Change/SW | 295 | 830 | 1 | 1126 |
| ARB No Change | 243 | 0 | 0 | 243 |
| ARB Change | 89 | 0 | 0 | 89 |
| | 1,273 | 1,575 | 107 | 2,955 |



Public Service

The Orange County Appraisal District strives to provide the taxpayers and taxing entities of Orange County an open and honest appraisal district. This has been accomplished in part, by providing timely and important press releases to the media regarding appraisal operations and deadlines as well as through the use of the District's updated website: www.orangecad.net. Orange County Appraisal District is very proud of the website and all that it provides to the public.

The Chief Appraiser, Michael "Mike" Cedars volunteers to speak on various topics pertaining to the operations of the district as well as topics of interest to senior citizens, service organizations and public entities. Recent topics have included: general operations, exemptions, protest procedures and new legislation. This has given these citizens an opportunity to put a "face" with the appraisal district and an opportunity to ask questions one-on-one. The Chief Appraiser has also been involved with several service organizations such as Rotary, United Way, Red Cross and Little Cypress – Mauriceville Education Foundation in an attempt to involve the District as part of the community.

The District's employees are also involved in several public service activities outside of their day-to-day job related duties. Our employees are involved in helping to meet the goal set for United Way contributions, by collecting Christmas gifts for children whose families are unable to provide for them, and participate in the American Cancer Society survivor walk as well as the Granger Chevrolet 5K run for United Way.

The District is also extremely proud of the quality service provided by our employees to our customers, the taxpayers and the taxing units. Our employees consistently go above-and-beyond to provide a courteous and helpful atmosphere. It is not uncommon to be given thanks and praise by our customers for outstanding service provided by employees.

As soon as the appraisal roll is certified, the information is presented to the Tax Assessor-Collector so that effective tax rates can be calculated. The Chief Appraiser also makes himself available to answer any questions. Our office also provides an employee to be available to assist the tax office personnel during peak times of the collection season.



Accomplishments

Methods and Assistance Program

Methods and Assistance Program reviews appraisal district governance, taxpayer assistance, operating and appraisal standards, and procedures and methodology at least once every 2 years. The Methods and Assistance Program review checks and ensures that appraisal districts are compliant with the International Association of Assessing Officers standards and Property Tax Division standards.

To acquire an "Exceeds" score, the District must receive a rating of over 100%. Orange County Appraisal District not only met the requirements but exceeded them in all possible categories.

In the 2015 M.A.P. Review the District met or exceeded all requirements. The next M.A.P. audit will be in 2017.

Property Value Study

The Property Value Study has two functions – to assess the median level of appraisal for an appraisal district and to determine if the values are at or near market value, for school funding purposes. This test of the district's values is performed every even-numbered year and as of the last study, the district has never been found to have values outside the required confidence intervals. This is done for equitable school funding. The state sends more money to those districts that are less able to raise money locally because of insufficient taxable property. Each appraisal district must have a ratio between 95% - 105%. The Orange County Appraisal District has worked diligently to ensure that our values consistently meet the requirements of the Texas Comptroller's Property Value Study. The next property value study will be performed in 2018.

Educational Requirements

The Orange County Appraisal District has been fortunate to maintain an appraisal staff that are all licensed by the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation and designated as Registered Professional Appraisers. New licensing requirements mandate that these appraisers maintain a minimum of 30 hours of training in any given year and must be recertified every two years on the anniversary date of their original certification. The District's Board of Directors has ensured that the budget includes adequate funding to allow for the required training. In addition, requirements contained in the Methods and Assistance Program audit call for additional training of non-licensed employees in the area of public service and records retention. All of these requirements have been met or exceeded.

Deadlines

The Texas Property Tax Code requires that several important deadlines be met each year. These include: 1) Preliminary estimates; 2) Appraisal Review Board approval of the appraisal roll; and 3) Certification of the appraisal roll. OCAD has met all deadlines in each of the past 10 years.



Open-Space Special Appraisal

The District has worked in conjunction with the Agricultural Committee to determine guidelines for the various types of agricultural uses of property in Orange County. These guidelines were used to question property owners who had applied for the special appraisal in previous years but did not fall into the guideline criteria. The property tax code allows the Chief Appraiser to require new applications when warranted and properties that were outside the guidelines were required to reapply

Over the past year, the District's mapping department has worked to provide digital maps showing all properties currently receiving either open-space or timber appraisal. USDA soil types are also shown. As lease information is acquired, the properties under lease are shown on the maps as well.



For more information, visit our Website:

www.orangecad.net

For additional copies write:

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