



How Market Value Assessments affect your taxes

Market value assessment is the process of estimating the value of a property for municipal and education taxation purposes.

Market value is defined as the price a property might reasonably sell for after adequate time and exposure in an open market when sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer.

Your 2011 property assessment will be based on the real estate market condition as of July 1, 2010, and the physical condition of your property as of December 31, 2010.

Over time, real estate values in the municipal neighbourhoods fluctuate by different rates as demand for properties change.

This change in market value is not always the same in every neighbourhood and the result is not necessarily a uniform relationship between properties.

For more analysis on the mill rate go to the town's website and follow the links: [Services Offered/Tax and Assessment](#)

Assessors review building characteristics such as the size, type, age, condition, amenities, upgrades, location, and lot characteristics.

Assessors also review the market indicators such as sale prices, list prices, appraisals, realtor evaluations, private sales, foreclosures, property owner's opinion, appeals, tax sales, market reports and studies.

A property's assessment does not in itself generate property taxes. Property taxes are generated to fund the town's budget, which is set by council.

The tax rate (mill rate) is based on the required budget divided by the total taxable property assessment. In turn, the tax rate multiplied by

the property assessment equals the required tax amount.

Property taxes pay for the operation and maintenance of the town which includes such services as police, fire protection, roads, parks, recreation, administration, and capital projects.

The tax rate also includes separate rates for the school tax and seniors' tax requisition from the province. The amount of these funds is set by the province and the town has no control over the amount requested.

The school tax is collected by the municipality and submitted to the Province of Alberta as requested. The province uses this to help pay for primary and secondary education programs.

The seniors' tax is collected for seniors' housing and allocated back to this program.

Pursuant to the Municipal Government Act, Alberta Regulation 310/2009 the assessed parties have sixty (60) days to review and appeal the property assessment from the date the notice is mailed.

In order to file an appeal/complaint about their assessment, the homeowner must first have spoken with an assessor of the Town of High River in an attempt to resolve the issue.

If the outcome is not satisfactory, the homeowner must then complete a complaint form and submit it, along with the correct filing fee, to the Town of High River by the complaint date of June 30, 2011.

A fee of \$50 must be submitted by all residential properties appealing their 2011 assessed property value and a fee of \$250.00



2010 River City Classic Car Show n Shine

Photo by Ted Dawson

must be submitted by all non-residential properties. The fee will be refunded if the board makes a decision in your favor or the assessment department reduces the assessment in consultation with you.

Failure to comply with the legislation and related Town of High River bylaws may result in your complaint being invalid.

For more information on a comparison of the 2010 tax rate compared to the 2011 mill rate or on how to file a complaint please call Paul Milligan, Town of High River Assessor at 403.603-3430 or visit our website at www.highriver.ca and follow the links: [Services Offered/Tax & Assessment](#).

Check your taxes from anywhere through eServices

The town's eService system makes it easier for residents to check their tax assessments and monitor their municipal accounts from the comfort of their homes or offices.

The eServices link is located on the town's home page, providing 24 hour access to utility and tax accounts seven days a week.

"Essentially it means people will no longer be required to come into the office or call during business hours to get this information," explained Bonnie Murray, manager of accounting. "They can look up the status of their accounts and update their information whenever it is convenient for them."

As well as checking their current account information, taxpayers will also be able to update it, such as changing their address if they move. Through this online service taxpayers will also be able to see every transaction they have made with the town and compare their taxes over several years.

Online information about utility accounts includes monthly consumption with graphs, comparisons and rates so customers can easily monitor their usage.

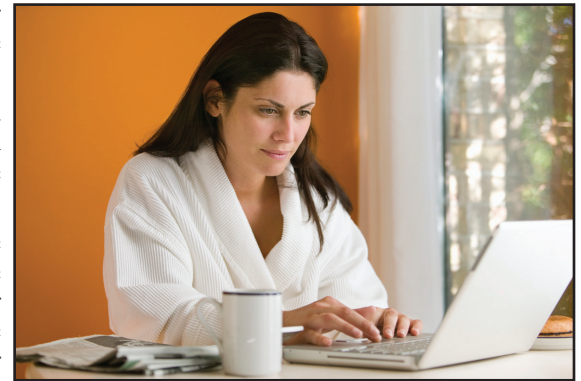
In order to gain online access, home or

business owners must first register for a login and password, which can be completed within minutes.

To set up their online access, users need to go to www.highriver.ca and click on the Citizen Self Service Login under the eServices tab.

They will be taken to a new window where users will need to click "Register" on the left-hand menu to set-up their login for the first time. The User ID box on the registration panel refers to the customer number, located on the top right hand corner of the utility bill.

"It's very important that users select the same type of account from the drop down menu as the account number they are entering," explained Sara-Lynn Christensen, finance



clerk for the town.

Residents experiencing trouble locating their User ID number or accessing their account can email corporateservices@highriver.ca for assistance.

TIPPs makes sense for paying taxes

The Tax Installment Payment Plan (TIPP) allows you to pay your property taxes in equal monthly installments instead of a single annual payment.

Taxpayers may apply if their tax & utility

accounts are up-to-date. Payment is automatically transferred from your bank account on the 15th of each month. The Town of High River does not charge for this service but normal bank charges may apply.

Payments start in January of the current year and run through to December with the first payment beginning January 15th.

The payments for the first six months are based on 1/12 of your previous year's assessment as an estimate. Monthly payments from July through December will automatically be adjusted in accordance with any increase/decrease in the municipal tax rate as indicated on the current year's property tax bill.

You may enroll in the program any time throughout the year by making all catch-up payments from January to the current month plus any outstanding penalties or arrears.

Tax assistance for seniors

The Education Property Tax Assistance for Seniors Program provides an annual rebate to assist senior homeowners with the year-to-year increases in the education tax portion of their property taxes.

This program is not based on income.

For more information please call 1-800-642-3853 or visit the Alberta Government website at www.seniors.alberta.ca to get an application.

Property Assessment Open House

If you have questions regarding your assessment, plan to attend one of the following open houses being held at the Town Office, 309B Macleod Trail SW

Thursday, May 19, 1 - 9 p.m.

Friday, May 20, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

If you are unable to attend any of the open houses, please feel free to call our assessor, Paul Milligan, at the Town Office at:

403.603.3430 - Direct line

403.652. 2396 - Fax

email: assessment@highriver.ca

Check out the website for information on tax and assessment:
[www.highriver.ca/ Services offered/Tax and Assessment](http://www.highriver.ca/ServicesOffered/TaxandAssessment)

Please note: deadline to appeal your assessment and tax notice is June 30, 2011.

The appeal must be in writing with the required appeal fee.