

Ohio – 05/01/08

Utilizing the informal appeal process to reduce costs for our REIT clients' Ohio properties may be an excellent alternative to starting the process more formally at the Board of Revision.

In many jurisdictions REITs are viewed as faceless deep money pockets who can afford to pay more than their fair share of taxes. Sometimes REITs may even be viewed as owing the community a little extra because profits from their operations are leaving town. In a forum that is often adversarial, the formal appeal processes typically does not lend itself to putting a human face on "out of town" taxpayers.

In contrast, the informal appeal process begins with a face-to-face meeting in a relaxed environment. Information is exchanged and the assessor makes a decision based solely on the facts presented, not on politics, perceptions, or a hometown appointed Board's posturing to extract funds for their local pet project. In our experience, most assessors are trying to get to the right fair market value for a subject property. Click here for more key points to consider when analyzing your Ohio properties.

- The process takes a few months during the summer through fall of an update or reappraisal year. The formal appeal process can take 6 to 18 months or longer.
- Any reduction will be reflected in the January tax bills, which has cash flow and budgeting benefits. In the normal formal process, the taxpayer has to pay the tax in part or full and then request a refund at the conclusion of the case.
- The formal appeal process is still available for 2008 until **March 31st, 2009**, if you do not like the informal decision.
- The reduction in fair market value does not hurt the schools financially because the tax rate is set after the values have been established.
- No bad press for image conscious taxpayers.
- The School Board does not participate in the process.
- The values for 2008 are not out yet, but as soon as they are available we could start the process.
- We have been able to obtain significant cuts in fair market value using this forum.

The following counties are undergoing a reappraisal in 2008: Ashland, Ashtabula, Athens, butler, Clermont, Fulton, Greene, Knox, Madison, Montgomery, Noble, Summit, & Wayne.

The following counties are undergoing an update in 2008: Auglaize, Clinton, Darke, Defiance, Delaware, Franklin, Gallia, Geauga, Hamilton, Hardin, Harrison, Henry, Jackson, Licking Mahoning, Mercer, Morrow, Perry, Pickaway, Pike, Preble, Putnam, Richland, Seneca, Shelby, Trumbull, Van Wert, & Wood.

In addition to informal appeals, PTG is also uniquely positioned to handle formal appeals in Ohio. Since local school boards are active in monitoring Ohio property tax appeals, PTG's local Attorney and Managing Consultant, Walt Rapacz, can provide clients with value added legal expertise since we do not have to layer attorney fees on top of our contingency based fee structure. For more information, contact Walt Rapacz at (440) 243-3925 or by email at wrapacz@paradigmtax.com.

