

# City of Newburgh

## Press Release

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*For immediate release*

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### City of Newburgh 2007 Revaluation Project Underway

The City of Newburgh Revaluation Project is well underway, according to City Manager Jean-Ann McGrane. This is the first revaluation since 1989, Ms. McGrane pointed out.

"We need the revaluation to re-establish equity to the assessment roll. Properties with similar values should have similar assessments, and all properties should be assessed at the same percentage of their value. This is not necessarily the case with the current tax roll. The revaluation will increase the accuracy and fairness of the City of Newburgh's assessment roll, so our residents pay no more than their fair share of taxes. It will also establish a fair and equitable tax base," she said.

The City of Newburgh awarded the revaluation contract to Tyler| CLT in December 2006. The project will be completed by the end of June 2008.

"CLT, North America's oldest and largest mass appraisal firm with more than 65 years of experience, has opened its field office, and has begun training a staff of data collectors who will soon be hitting the streets. CLT was chosen over the other responders because of its skills, professionalism, and experience working in bilingual communities. The company will implement an aggressive bilingual English/Spanish public relations plan throughout the project," explained City Assessor Steve Ruelke, who is overseeing the project. Ruelke went on to say that 159 people responded to data collector advertisements placed by CLT, 42 were interviewed, and 12 were hired.

The data collection phase of the Revaluation Project will begin during the week of February 26. Data collectors will be going door-to-door to record information and images on approximately 7,000 properties, and will begin in the central portion of the City. Before field work operations begin, an introductory letter in English/Spanish will be sent to all properties

within that area, and similar notices will follow for the rest of the City, which has been broken down into six zones.

Important information about the data collectors:

- Every data collector will display an official project color photo ID.
- All field staff and their vehicles will be registered with both the city authorities and local police.
- Employee names and the locations in which they will be working will be available at the City Assessor's office.
- Data collectors will be going door to door asking to conduct both interior and exterior inspections.
- Occupants do not have to let data collectors in; but the accuracy of the assessment is enhanced by viewing it inside and out
- Data collectors will **not** attempt to enter a house if a responsible adult is not present.
- Data collectors will ask questions and observe the property data, such as age, type of basement, number of rooms, baths, type of heat, interior finish components, and anything that is unique to the building.
- Data collectors are not appraisers and cannot answer valuation or tax questions.

Owners will receive a written property report, called a data mailer, this summer. The first tax bills using the new assessments will not be issued until 2008.

An ad-hoc Revaluation Advisory Committee, which met for the first time on February 7, was appointed by the City Manager. The committee, created to help maximize citizen input in the process, includes Mike Fogarty, Roxie Royal, Pauline Dillard, Ed Weber, Christine Bello, Rene Campos, Anne Ridgeway Thomas, and Virgen Segarra. The committee will be offering recommendations to CLT and the Assessor about public outreach and will monitor the process during each of its phases.

In addition, several community information forums will be scheduled, with the first to be held at 7 p.m. on March 1 in the City Council Chambers, third floor of City Hall, 83 Broadway.

Ms. McGrane said, "We want property owners to know as much as possible about what we're doing so that they can have confidence not only in the process, but in the final result – a fair and equitable assessment roll."

For more information call Steve Ruelke, City of Newburgh Assessor (845-561-7333) or Diego Samanez, Tyler|CLT Project Supervisor (845-562-4393).