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PERRY COUNTY AUDITOR

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**New Lexington** - Ohio law requires that my office update the values of every parcel in the county at least once every six years, this is referred to as a Reappraisal. Ohio law also requires, at the mid-point (3rd year) of the 6-year cycle, that my office conduct an analysis of recent sales of similar properties that have occurred in the county. This analysis of sales at the midpoint of the Reappraisal is referred to as a Triennial Update, which our office has conducted for tax year 2020, with taxes payable on those values in 2021.

The primary objective of a Triennial Update is to equalize property values to reflect changes in the marketplace since the last valuation event. Since property values do not change uniformly, some values will go up, some stay the same and some may have gone down since the 2017 Reappraisal.

Sales data is analyzed for trends in the market and values are equalized based on sales factors specific to each neighborhood area. Therefore, changes in value will vary between neighborhood areas. Neighborhood areas for valuing purposes are defined by like housing type, age, and size. A neighborhood area can be larger or smaller than what you may think of as your neighborhood.

Valid real estate transactions drive the market tax valuation. Over the prior three years, a seller's market condition has occurred. This condition reflects property sales exceeding the market tax valuation established by our office during the Reappraisal cycle three years ago. Even during the current pandemic, property sales are continuing to follow this market trend. The legislation and mandates require all similar properties be adjusted to reflect what the market is dictating.

The Auditor's office has implemented initiatives and tools to help assure the accuracy of sales data being analyzed. One of these initiatives is our new sales verification program. These tools and initiatives provide our office with a firm leg to stand on in the event we need to push back on any overreaching value increases that may be mandated by the State. The State has the final say in values but our data can be used, to an extent, to argue against their findings.

The Auditor's office submitted an initial value increase/decrease request of 10% based on our data. This request was then reviewed by the State and compared against their data. The State of Ohio responded and recommended that Perry County

properties see an aggregate increase of 15%. The State's increase was determined by a sales analysis performed by the Ohio Department of Taxation. My office pushed back on this and provided further evidence to support our initial 10% request. The DTE (Department of Tax Equalization) eventually backed off of their findings of 15% and mandated that the Perry County triennial update only bring on 11.5% aggregate increase to residential properties. As mentioned earlier, these increases are mandated by the State and the percentage change varies by location.