

To: City of Minneapolis City Council
City Clerk

From: Rebecca L. Malmquist, City Assessor

Date: July 2, 2026

Subject: Response to Reappointment Nomination Questionnaire

Before responding to the questionnaire, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Mayor Frey for his nomination and to the Minneapolis City Council for its thoughtful consideration of my reappointment as City Assessor. It has been both a privilege and an honor to serve the residents, businesses, and taxpayers of Minneapolis in this role. I am especially grateful for the exceptional professionalism, expertise, and dedication demonstrated by the employees of the Assessor's Office, whose commitment to public service makes our success possible. Together, we have maintained a standard of excellence in assessment administration while navigating one of the most dynamic and complex real estate environments in recent history.

Throughout my tenure, the Assessor's Office has operated under unprecedented scrutiny from a variety of stakeholders, including property owners, elected officials, taxing jurisdictions, the media, and the broader public. Despite these challenges, our staff has remained steadfast in its commitment to fairness, equity, transparency, and accuracy. I am proud of the work we have accomplished, the trust we have built, and the objective market expertise we continue to provide to City leadership and taxpayers alike.

I welcome the opportunity to continue serving the City of Minneapolis and appreciate the Council's review of the following responses. I remain committed to ensuring that the Assessor's Office delivers accurate, equitable, and defensible assessments while supporting the City's fiscal health, maintaining public trust, and providing exceptional service to the community.

QUESTIONS FOR ALL APPOINTED CITY DEPARTMENT HEADS

1) Vision, Challenges, & Opportunities

- a) Please share what attracted you to this role with the City of Minneapolis?
- b) What do you see as the top challenges and opportunities facing this department?
- c) What are your top three priorities for the department to pursue this term? How have these priorities evolved throughout your previous appointments to this role?

Response

- a) In 2014, the position of Director of Assessments in the City Assessor's Office was posted. At that time, I served as the City of Minnetonka City Assessor. I was attracted to the role and to the city because I could use what I feel are my "superpowers" on a larger scale. I love the assessment profession and the challenges and opportunities it brings. I am, by nature, a problem-solver and very much enjoy a good challenge. The City of Minneapolis offered me the opportunity to work on larger problems and be faced with more challenges, whether that be staff professional development, valuation complexity, litigation intricacies, or educating an even more diverse community of taxpayers about what we do and how we do it.

I was attracted to the role of City Assessor when it became open in 2021 because it combines technical expertise, public service, and leadership in a way that has a direct impact on residents, businesses, and the City's fiscal health. Accurate and equitable property valuation is foundational to the property tax system,

and I have always been drawn to work that promotes fairness, transparency, and public trust. Minneapolis is a dynamic and complex city, and the opportunity to lead one of the most respected assessment offices in the country while serving a community of this size and significance was a challenge I was eager to take on.

- b) The greatest challenge facing the department is navigating continued market uncertainty while maintaining public confidence in the assessment process. Over the past several years, Minneapolis has experienced significant shifts in residential, commercial, multifamily, and office property markets. As market conditions evolve, taxpayers expect assessments that are accurate, understandable, and reflective of real-world conditions. At the same time, local governments are operating in an environment of increased public scrutiny and demand for transparency.

These challenges also create opportunities. The Assessor's Office is uniquely positioned to provide objective market analysis that supports informed decision-making by taxpayers, elected officials, and city leadership. There are continued opportunities to strengthen public understanding of the assessment process, enhance the use of technology and data analytics, and further develop a highly skilled workforce prepared to meet the evolving demands of the profession.

- c) My top priorities for the next term are: (1) maintaining accurate, equitable, and defensible valuations as we make our way through what continues to be a very challenging market; (2) strengthening public trust through transparency, communication, and accessibility; and (3) investing in organizational excellence through staff development, succession planning, and continuous improvement. While these priorities have remained consistent throughout my tenure, they have evolved in response to changing market conditions and community expectations. Early in my leadership, much of our focus centered on operational effectiveness and modernization. More recently, we have devoted significant attention to helping taxpayers understand rapidly changing market conditions and their impact on property values.

Looking ahead, I believe the department's success will continue to depend on balancing technical excellence with exceptional public service. Assessment work is data-driven and highly specialized, but its impact is personal. Every valuation represents a property owner, a business, or a resident. My goal is to ensure the department continues to deliver accurate and equitable assessments while remaining responsive, transparent, and accountable to the people we serve.

2) Leadership Style & Management Practices

- a) Describe your leadership style and management philosophy? How do you recognize when staff are engaged and effectively supported?
- b) How do you incorporate continuous improvement into your own management practices, accountability standards, and oversight of senior and mid-level leadership within the department?
- c) As a department leader, how do you promote a workplace culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion?

Response

- a) My leadership style is collaborative, accountable, and people centered. I believe employees perform at their highest level when they understand how their work contributes to the broader mission of the organization, have clear expectations, and feel supported in their professional growth. I strive to create an environment where staff are empowered to make decisions, share ideas, and take ownership of their work while also understanding that accountability and continuous improvement are essential to public service.

I recognize that staff are engaged when they actively participate in problem-solving, seek opportunities to learn and grow, collaborate across teams, and demonstrate pride in the work they produce. Engagement is also reflected in retention, internal advancement, willingness to take on new challenges, and the quality of

service delivered to the public. Equally important, I want employees to feel heard and valued. Regular communication, one-on-one discussions, team meetings, and professional development conversations help ensure staff have the support and resources they need to succeed.

I am a state and national instructor. I went through the exercise of doing so because I wanted to become a better leader. Understanding different learning styles and being able to adapt equates to being a better leader. I continue to seek out learning opportunities to become a better leader and mentor for my team.

- b) Continuous improvement begins with a willingness to evaluate what is working well and where opportunities for growth exist. I regularly seek feedback from staff, peers, professional colleagues, and City leadership and use that feedback to improve my own leadership practices. Throughout my career, I have benefited from mentors, professional associations, and leadership experiences that challenged me to continue learning and adapting.

Within the department, I establish clear expectations, encourage open communication, and focus on measurable outcomes. Senior and mid-level leaders are expected not only to achieve operational goals but also to develop their teams, foster collaboration, and contribute to a positive workplace culture. Regular performance discussions, project reviews, and leadership development opportunities help ensure accountability while supporting growth. My goal is to build leaders throughout the organization, not simply manage day-to-day operations.

- c) Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion begins with creating a workplace where every employee feels respected, supported, and able to contribute. As a leader, I work to ensure hiring, development, and advancement opportunities are fair and accessible, and that employees with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives are welcomed and valued. Strong organizations benefit from diverse viewpoints, particularly when serving diverse communities such as Minneapolis.

Throughout my career, I have supported initiatives that expand participation, mentorship, and leadership opportunities within the profession. I co-founded the International Association of Assessing Officers Women's Initiative Network and established the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council during my term as IAAO President. At the City I co-founded WOMEN, one of the first employee resource groups. We launched not only WOMEN (formerly 29% club) but pushed the city to establish a strong foundation for other employee resource groups.

I have worked to foster a culture where employees are encouraged to bring forward ideas, challenge assumptions respectfully, and contribute to continuous improvement. Internally and externally, I believe inclusion strengthens decision-making, improves service delivery, and helps build trust with the communities we serve.

3) Organizational Structure, Staffing, & Budget

- a) How do you evaluate the department's existing organizational structure, staffing, and budget priorities? When areas for change or improvement are identified, how do you implement those changes?
- b) What is the Director's role in management of a department's operational budget? Describe your own approach to budget oversight and how you have adapted to any previous budget challenges.
- c) As a department leader, how do you balance budgetary demands between your non-personnel and personnel budget?

Response

- a) I regularly evaluate the department's organizational structure, staffing levels, and budget priorities to ensure they align with our core mission of delivering accurate, equitable, and timely assessments while providing excellent public service. This evaluation includes reviewing workload distribution, performance measures, service demands, succession planning needs, and emerging industry trends. Because

assessment administration is both highly technical and heavily regulated, it is important that resources are aligned to support operational efficiency while maintaining compliance with state requirements and professional standards.

When opportunities for improvement are identified, I focus on understanding the root cause of the issue, engaging affected staff and leaders in the discussion, and implementing changes thoughtfully and transparently. Throughout my tenure, we have adapted organizational responsibilities, strengthened leadership capacity, and refined processes to better respond to changing workloads and market conditions. Successful change management requires clear communication, stakeholder engagement, and a commitment to continuous improvement rather than change for its own sake.

- b) The Department Head is ultimately responsible for ensuring that public resources are managed responsibly and aligned with organizational priorities. My role includes establishing budget priorities, monitoring expenditures, identifying efficiencies, evaluating service impacts, and ensuring accountability for the use of taxpayer dollars. Effective budget management requires balancing immediate operational needs with long-term organizational sustainability.

Throughout my career, I have managed budgets during periods of both stability and constraint. My approach is to focus on the services that are most critical to fulfilling the department's mission while seeking opportunities to improve efficiency and maximize available resources. When budget reductions are necessary, I prioritize transparency, thoughtful planning, and minimizing impacts to service delivery whenever possible. Fiscal stewardship requires making difficult decisions at times, but those decisions should always be guided by organizational priorities and the needs of the public we serve.

- c) People are the department's most valuable resource and represent the largest portion of our budget. Assessment administration relies on skilled professionals whose expertise directly impacts the accuracy, equity, and defensibility of our work. For that reason, I place significant emphasis on recruiting, retaining, developing, and supporting employees while also ensuring we have the technology, training, and operational resources necessary for them to succeed.

Balancing personnel and non-personnel expenditures requires a long-term perspective. Investments in technology, process improvements, training, and professional development can increase efficiency and strengthen service delivery, while investments in staff ensure we maintain the expertise needed to meet our responsibilities. My goal is to make budget decisions that support both operational effectiveness and organizational resilience so the department remains well-positioned to meet current and future challenges.

4) Collaboration with City Council & City Government

- a) How does this appointed position fit within the City's government structure, including your relationships with the City Council, Mayor, OPS, OCS, and other City departments? Where does direction come from, where do you bring concerns?
- b) What factors do you believe are critical to building and maintaining a productive working relationship with the City Council? Describe your approach and experience communicating on significant issues, responding to Council concerns, and balancing policy direction with your professional judgment on operations.
- c) How can the City Council better support this role and department?

Response

- a) The City Assessor occupies a unique role within Minneapolis government. The position is established in the City Charter, reflecting the fundamental importance of assessment and taxation to local government. Similar to the City Attorney, Fire Department, and Police Department, the Assessor's Office performs a core governmental function that is essential to the City's operations and long-term fiscal stability. Property taxes represent the City's largest, most stable, and most flexible single source of revenue, supporting the services

residents rely on every day. Fair and equitable taxation begins with fair and equitable valuation, making the work of the Assessor's Office fundamental to public trust in the property tax system.

The City Assessor serves an important role within the City's government structure by providing objective property valuation services, market analysis, and assessment administration that support the City's fiscal health and policy objectives. The position requires close collaboration with the Mayor, City Council, Office of Public Service, Fire, Office of Emergency Management, Finance and Property Services, Community Planning and Economic Development, the City Attorney's Office, and numerous other departments. Because property valuation affects taxation, redevelopment, housing, budgeting, and economic development, the Assessor's Office routinely works across departmental boundaries to support informed decision-making.

Direction comes from multiple sources, including state statutes and professional standards governing assessment practices, City leadership priorities, adopted budgets, and operational goals established through collaboration with the Mayor and City Council. As City Assessor, I am responsible for communicating concerns, emerging trends, operational challenges, and market conditions to City leadership in a timely and transparent manner. My role is to provide objective expertise, quantitative data, and recommendations so policymakers have the information necessary to make informed decisions.

- b) Strong working relationships with the City Council are built on trust, transparency, responsiveness, and mutual respect. Council members have a responsibility to represent their constituents and establish policy direction, while department leaders have a responsibility to provide professional expertise and ensure effective implementation of City services. Productive relationships are strengthened when communication is timely, accurate, and focused on helping decision-makers understand both opportunities and potential challenges.

Throughout my tenure, I have regularly presented complex assessment and property tax issues to the City Council, responded to constituent concerns, and provided analysis on matters affecting the City's tax base and fiscal health. My approach is to communicate clearly, answer questions directly, and ensure elected officials have the information they need to serve residents effectively. While there are occasions when professional judgment and policy preferences may differ, I believe the best outcomes occur when discussions are grounded in facts, data, and a shared commitment to serving the public interest.

- c) The most valuable support the City Council can provide is continued engagement, communication, and partnership. Assessment administration involves complex market dynamics and statutory requirements that are not always visible to the public. Opportunities to discuss emerging trends, policy impacts, taxpayer concerns, and market conditions help ensure that Council members have the context necessary to communicate effectively with constituents and make informed decisions.

I also believe there is value in continuing efforts to improve public understanding of the assessment process and the relationship between property values and property taxes. When residents have access to accurate information and understand how assessments are determined, it helps build trust in the process and confidence in local government. The Assessor's Office remains committed to serving as a resource to the Council and working collaboratively to support the City's broader goals and priorities.

In addition, I would welcome opportunities to partner with Council Members, neighborhood organizations, business associations, and community groups to expand public education around property valuation and classification. Many property owners have questions about how values are determined, how classifications affect taxation, and how market conditions influence assessments. Providing additional opportunities for residents and business owners to engage directly with assessment professionals can improve understanding, reduce confusion, and strengthen public confidence in the fairness and transparency of the property tax system.

DEPARTMENT SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- 1) What are the most significant trends in Minneapolis property values over your previous term, and what factors are driving those trends across different property types?

Response

The most significant trend during my previous term has been the divergence in performance across property types. While residential property values experienced substantial growth during and immediately following the pandemic, commercial office properties have faced unprecedented challenges as remote and hybrid work models altered space demand and investor expectations. At the same time, multifamily, industrial, and certain retail sectors have experienced varying levels of stability and growth depending on location, occupancy, operating costs, and market demand. These differing market conditions have created a level of valuation complexity unlike anything experienced in recent decades.

Several factors have driven these trends, including changes in workplace behavior, interest rate increases, inflationary pressures, construction costs, housing demand, and broader economic uncertainty. The downtown office market has been particularly impacted by reduced occupancy levels, changing tenant preferences, and higher capitalization rates, all of which have contributed to declining market values. Conversely, Minneapolis has continued to experience investment and redevelopment activity in many areas of the city, demonstrating the long-term strength and resilience of the local market despite challenges in specific sectors.

One of the most important responsibilities of the Assessor's Office during periods of market disruption is to ensure that assessments accurately reflect actual market conditions, regardless of whether values are increasing or decreasing. Our role is not to influence the market but to measure it fairly and consistently. Throughout my tenure, the department has remained focused on producing accurate, equitable, and defensible valuations that reflect changing market realities while providing taxpayers, elected officials, and city leadership with objective information about emerging trends and their potential impacts on the City's tax base.

- 2) When the City faces budgetary and economic challenges, what is the City Assessor's role in identifying potential solutions and supporting efforts to effectively manage challenging economic periods?

Response

The City Assessor plays an important role in helping City leaders understand the market conditions that influence the property tax base and, ultimately, the City's fiscal health. While the Assessor's Office does not establish tax policy or make budget decisions, it provides objective market analysis, valuation data, and trend information that help policymakers evaluate potential impacts and make informed decisions. During periods of economic uncertainty, accurate and timely information becomes even more critical.

The Assessor's Office provides more than annual property valuations. Because we work closely with taxpayers, neighborhood organizations, business stakeholders, elected officials, and City departments, we maintain a detailed understanding of local market conditions and emerging trends across Minneapolis. This allows us to provide timely analysis, respond quickly to changing market conditions, support redevelopment and planning discussions, address taxpayer concerns directly, and deliver market intelligence that informs broader City decision-making. The combination of local expertise, direct accountability, and day-to-day engagement with Minneapolis properties and stakeholders strengthens both assessment accuracy and public trust in the property tax system.

Over the past several years, Minneapolis has experienced significant changes across multiple property sectors, particularly within the downtown office market. These market shifts have contributed to increased valuation appeals and litigation as property owners, investors, and taxing jurisdictions work through rapidly changing market conditions. Throughout this period, the Assessor's Office has provided data and analysis to City leadership regarding valuation trends, tax base shifts, redevelopment activity, and emerging market risks. We have also worked diligently to defend the City's valuations in Minnesota Tax Court. This work includes developing market-supported valuation analyses, preparing evidence, providing expert testimony, and resolving disputes when appropriate. Effective

assessment administration requires not only establishing accurate values, but also ensuring those values can withstand scrutiny through the appeals and litigation process. By maintaining strong valuation practices and vigorously defending supportable assessments, the Assessor's Office helps protect the City's tax base, mitigate unnecessary revenue loss, and promote equitable treatment of all taxpayers.

In challenging economic periods, the Assessor's Office serves as both a steward of the property tax system and a trusted source of objective information. Our responsibility is to ensure assessments accurately reflect market conditions while providing elected officials, City leadership, and taxpayers with a clear understanding of how those conditions may affect property values, tax base growth, litigation exposure, and the City's overall fiscal outlook. Reliable data, sound valuation practices, and transparent analysis help create the foundation for informed policy decisions and help protect the City's financial interests during periods of economic uncertainty.

- 3) How have recent changes in property values affected the distribution of the property tax burden among residential, commercial, industrial, and multifamily properties? Are there additional steps the City can take to address any disparities or inequities in how property taxes may impact specific areas or groups?

Response

Changes in property values affect how the overall property tax burden is distributed among property types because Minnesota's property tax system is based on relative value. When one property type experiences stronger value growth than another, its share of the tax base generally increases, resulting in a larger share of the tax burden. Conversely, when values decline relative to other property types, that property's share of the tax burden may decrease. Over the past several years, Minneapolis has experienced significant differences in market performance across property sectors. Residential properties experienced appreciation during and immediately following the pandemic, while downtown office properties faced significant value declines. These shifts have resulted in corresponding changes in the distribution of the tax burden across property classes.

It is important to recognize that property values are only one component of the property tax system. Tax policy decisions made by the State, County, City, School District, and other taxing jurisdictions also influence the final tax burden borne by property owners. As a result, changes in property taxes are not always directly correlated with changes in assessed values. One of the Assessor's Office's most important responsibilities is ensuring that all properties are assessed fairly and equitably so that each property owner pays only their appropriate share based on market value and statutory classification requirements.

The City can continue supporting equity within the property tax system through public education, transparency, and informed policy discussions. While the Assessor's Office does not establish tax policy, it can provide data and analysis that help policymakers understand how market shifts, valuation changes, and development patterns affect taxpayers across different neighborhoods and property types. Maintaining accurate and equitable assessments remains the foundation of a fair property tax system because fairness begins with ensuring that similar properties are valued consistently and according to market evidence.

- 4) Have you been able to identify any sustained trends in property valuation across neighborhoods or areas of the city? If so, what market conditions appear to be contributing to those differences?

Response

Yes. While Minneapolis functions as a single city, it is comprised of many distinct real estate submarkets, each influenced by its own economic, demographic, and development factors. Over time, we have observed sustained differences in value growth, investment activity, and market demand across neighborhoods. Factors such as housing inventory, redevelopment activity, proximity to employment centers and amenities, access to transportation, neighborhood investment, and buyer preferences all contribute to differences in property valuation trends throughout the city.

In recent years, some neighborhoods have experienced stronger appreciation driven by continued housing demand, investment, and redevelopment activity, while others have experienced more modest growth or periods

of stabilization. We have also observed significant variation by property type. Residential neighborhoods have generally remained resilient, while downtown office properties have experienced sustained value declines due to reduced demand for office space, higher vacancy rates, changing workplace patterns, and broader shifts in investor sentiment. Multifamily, industrial, and retail properties have each responded differently based on market conditions specific to those sectors.

The Assessor's Office continuously monitors sales activity, market trends, income and expense data, redevelopment patterns, and other economic indicators to ensure assessments accurately reflect conditions within each neighborhood and property type. Our responsibility is to identify and measure these trends objectively so that valuations remain fair, equitable, and supported by market evidence. Understanding neighborhood-level market dynamics not only improves assessment accuracy but also provides valuable insight into broader development, investment, and economic trends occurring throughout Minneapolis.

- 5) What is the current outlook forecast for the downtown commercial real estate market, and what indicators will the Assessor's Office be monitoring to assess future market conditions?

Response

While it is not the role of the Assessor's Office to forecast future market performance, it is our responsibility to analyze current market conditions, identify emerging trends, and monitor indicators that may influence future property values. Based on the information currently available, the outlook for the downtown commercial real estate market remains challenging, though there are signs that portions of the market may be beginning to stabilize. The office sector continues to face pressure from elevated vacancy rates, reduced space utilization, evolving workplace preferences, and higher financing costs. These factors have contributed to declining property values and reduced investor demand in many office buildings across the country. At the same time, downtown Minneapolis continues to benefit from significant public and private investment, a growing residential population, major employers, entertainment venues, cultural assets, and ongoing redevelopment efforts that support long-term vitality.

Rather than forecasting outcomes, the Assessor's Office monitors market indicators and evaluates whether available evidence suggests continued decline, stabilization, or recovery.

- 6) How does the Assessor's Office ensure that assessments accurately reflect rapidly changing market conditions, particularly in sectors experiencing significant volatility and growth?

Response

The Assessor's Office relies on a comprehensive, data-driven approach to ensure assessments accurately reflect changing market conditions. We continuously analyze property sales, income and expense information, lease activity, construction trends, market reports, redevelopment activity, and other relevant indicators. Our staff reviews market data throughout the year and conducts extensive analysis during each assessment cycle to identify trends, measure changes in value, and ensure assessments are supported by current market evidence. This work is performed in accordance with Minnesota statutes, Department of Revenue requirements, and recognized professional appraisal standards.

In sectors experiencing significant volatility, such as the downtown office market, the importance of timely data analysis and professional judgment becomes even greater. Market disruptions often create fewer comparable sales, changing investor expectations, and rapidly shifting market conditions. To address these challenges, the Assessor's Office utilizes multiple valuation approaches, reviews local and national market data, analyzes income-producing property performance, and works with industry experts when appropriate. Our goal is to ensure that assessments reflect actual market conditions rather than historical assumptions or temporary market noise.

Accuracy is also supported through quality control measures, internal review processes, taxpayer engagement, and the appeals process. Property owners play an important role by providing information about their properties, operations, and market experiences. We actively encourage dialogue with property owners and their representatives because transparency and information sharing help improve valuation accuracy. Ultimately, our

responsibility is to ensure that assessments remain fair, equitable, defensible, and reflective of the market as it exists on the assessment date, regardless of whether values are increasing, declining, or remaining stable.

- 7) To what extent is growth in the city's tax base being driven by new development and redevelopment activity as opposed to appreciation in existing properties? What does this data suggest about broader development trends in Minneapolis?

Response

In recent years, Minneapolis has experienced both appreciation in existing properties and value growth from redevelopment activity; however, new construction activity has slowed significantly compared to previous development cycles. Higher interest rates, construction costs, financing challenges, and broader economic uncertainty have made many projects more difficult to finance and complete. At the same time, portions of the downtown office market have experienced significant value declines, creating additional challenges for overall tax base growth. As a result, appreciation in existing properties and targeted redevelopment activity have played a more significant role in maintaining the City's tax base than large-scale new construction.

The data suggests that Minneapolis is currently in a period of transition. While development activity continues, growth is increasingly influenced by reinvestment in existing properties, adaptive reuse opportunities, redevelopment projects, and changing market dynamics rather than the rapid pace of new construction seen in prior years. Looking ahead, the City's long-term tax base health will depend on its ability to attract investment, encourage redevelopment where appropriate, support housing and economic growth, and adapt to changing market conditions. From an assessment perspective, these trends reinforce the importance of continuously monitoring market conditions to ensure assessments accurately reflect both investment patterns and evolving economic realities across the city.

- 8) In addition to what you have already shared - can you identify an area of success and an area that has been challenging for the City Assessor's Office that you believe are important for the City Council to recognize?

Response

One of the greatest successes of the Assessor's Office during my tenure has been our ability to navigate one of the most volatile and complex real estate markets in recent history while continuing to produce accurate, equitable, and defensible assessments. Over the past several years, we have experienced unprecedented shifts in property values across multiple sectors, particularly within the downtown office market. Despite these challenges, the department has maintained compliance with state requirements, successfully defended assessments through the appeals process, modernized operations, strengthened leadership capacity, and continued to provide City leaders with objective market analysis that supports informed decision-making. I am particularly proud of the professionalism, resilience, and dedication demonstrated by our staff throughout this period of significant change.

One of our greatest challenges has been helping taxpayers understand the relationship between property values, property taxes, and changing market conditions. Property taxation is inherently complex, and recent shifts in value among residential, commercial, multifamily, and office properties have created understandable confusion and concern among property owners. In many cases, taxpayers see changes in property taxes and assume they are solely the result of assessment changes, when in reality tax burdens are influenced by multiple factors including market shifts, tax policy decisions, levies, and property classification. As market conditions become more dynamic, the need for education, communication, and transparency becomes even more important.

Looking forward, I believe one of the greatest opportunities for the Assessor's Office is to continue strengthening public understanding and trust in the assessment process. Through expanded outreach, improved communication, community partnerships, and greater public engagement, we can help residents better understand how assessments are determined and how they fit into the broader property tax system. Maintaining public confidence requires not only technical excellence, but also a commitment to accessibility, transparency, and service to the community.

I would also encourage recognition of the important role the Assessor's Office plays in the overall success of the City, even though much of our work occurs behind the scenes. We are often a "quiet but mighty" department whose work touches every property owner and every taxpayer. The assessments we produce establish the equitable tax base upon which property taxes are distributed, helping ensure that the cost of local government is allocated fairly and consistently. Property taxes are the City's largest, most stable, and most flexible source of revenue, supporting essential services such as public safety, infrastructure, housing initiatives, and neighborhood investments. While our work may not always be highly visible, creating and maintaining a fair, equitable, and defensible tax base is one of the most fundamental responsibilities of local government and an important contributor to public trust.