



March 28, 2025 Manhattan Residents:

Good News update, it was recently announced that they Will County Supervisor of Assessments office calculated the tentative (I.D.O.R.) Illinois Department of Revenue's Property Tax Division in error. Instead of the average Will County Township Multiplier being 13% it is 7.19 %. Manhattan's multiplier went from 12.17% down to 6.26%. Now it can still change slightly up or down because this revised data is based on 10 months of 2024 sales but usually the change is very slight in either direction once all twelve months of 2024 sales are included. As I understand the confusion in these calculations is in part due to the I.D.O.R. using new computer software this year.

This year I will retire as the Manhattan Township Assessor after 31 years. I was first elected back in 1993 starting my first term January 1, 1994. I always ran for this office as an Independent Candidate that required me to collect voters' signatures to be placed on the election ballot. My thoughts were if the voters stopped signing my election ballot petitions it would be time for me to step down. So I want to sincerely thank all of the Manhattan Residents that supported me all these years.

On May 19, 2025 Will County Employees will be at the Manhattan Township Hall for an Exemption Event between the hours of 10 am and 2 pm to help our property owners to sign up for property tax exemptions such as: Regular Senior (must be 65 years of age or more), Senior Freeze (yearly household income must be \$65,000 or less), Disabled Veteran, and Disabled Person.

I wish I could leave with even better news than the revised Equalization Factor. Unfortunately the State of Illinois Property Tax System does not allow me to do it. I truly encourage everyone to continue to read the rest of this letter.

My last day will be December 31, 2025, so I will be doing the 2025 property assessments. What I can suggest to everyone is to always call me when their assessment notice is suspected to be in error when you receive a notice. A property assessment appeal can always be part of due process and does not require an attorney. It will always be the evidence presented that determines the outcome of an appeal.

To help judge the fairness of comparing property assessments, the Record Search Function of the Manhattan Township Website. <https://manhattantownship.com> is available. I helped

many residents with instructions how to use it and I will continue this year for anyone that needs my help.

The table below displays the recently revised Will County 2025 Illinois Department of Revenue's preliminary Equalization Factors. When the township assessor satisfies the Illinois Department of Revenue's yearly equalization factor that is calculated from the I.D.O.R.'s Sale Ratio Study there is no additional multiplier applied by Will County.

The revised Will County Township Equalization Factors Chart appears below:

I ask you to continue to read the rest of this article for more information.

You may wonder where the state of Illinois came up with the fact that real property should be assessed at thirty-three and one third percent of Market Value (what property is typically selling for from year to year). It happened during the Illinois Constitutional Convention in 1970. At that time it seems there were many different levels of assessments being used in different counties. In an effort to have more uniformity in the real property tax assessment process a study was conducted and that is how the current assessment level was decided back in 1970. I for one think this assessment level is too much of a burden for people to live in their own homes with all of the inflation in the real estate market some 55 years later, along with the inflation in everything else. However this is the system still being used by the Illinois Department of Revenue to force assessments to increase. Please scroll down to view them on the next page.

Scroll down to view the 2025 Illinois Department of Revenue's Preliminary Recently Revised Equalization Factors.

Township	2022	2023	2024	10 months	2024	3 year median	2025 Proposed Factor
			Adj Factor		median		
Wheatland	32.42	30.50	1.1281	25.36	28.61	30.51	1.0926
Dupage	33.01	30.95	1.1056	26.71	29.53	31.16	1.0696
Plainfield	32.70	30.96	1.1052	26.41	29.19	30.95	1.0770
Lockport	32.62	31.50	1.1063	27.01	29.88	31.33	1.0639
Homer	33.01	31.08	1.0984	27.02	29.67	31.25	1.0665
Troy	32.88	31.59	1.0887	26.99	29.38	31.28	1.0655
Joliet	32.80	30.64	1.1159	25.94	28.94	30.79	1.0825
New Lenox	33.23	31.47	1.0913	27.14	29.62	31.44	1.0602
Frankfort	32.78	31.60	1.1084	27.00	29.93	31.43	1.0604
Channahon	32.57	32.20	1.0883	27.49	29.91	31.56	1.0562
Jackson	32.42	30.91	1.0871	26.59	28.91	30.74	1.0842
Manhattan	32.23	31.20	1.0886	28.18	30.68	31.37	1.0626
Green Garden	31.93	31.47	1.0976	26.27	28.83	30.74	1.0842
Monee	32.08	31.20	1.1516	26.17	30.14	31.14	1.0705
Crete	32.72	31.80	1.1172	27.14	30.32	31.61	1.0544
Wilmington	32.40	33.14	1.0458	29.04	30.37	31.97	1.0426
Florence	33.80	30.30	1.0533	26.09	27.48	30.52	1.0920
Wilton	33.80	30.30	1.0533	26.09	27.48	30.52	1.0920
Peotone	32.70	30.62	1.0840	26.79	29.04	30.78	1.0827
Will	33.80	30.30	1.0533	26.09	27.48	30.52	1.0920
Washington	33.46	31.17	1.0969	27.17	29.80	31.47	1.0590
Reed	32.79	30.52	1.0533	27.94	29.43	30.91	1.0783
Custer	33.80	30.30	1.0533	26.09	27.48	30.52	1.0920
Wesley	33.55	30.30	1.0533	26.09	27.48	30.44	1.0950
County	32.72	31.11	1.1081	26.59	29.46	31.10	1.0719

On the table above you will note that the previously published Equalization Factor of 13.92% has been changed to 7.19 % increase is the average for Will County. So it has been cut nearly in half after Will County discovered the error. What caused the calculation error was the data used in the 2023 column. The original chart published in February in the 2023 column the level of assessment numbers were before the local township assessors made their assessment adjustments in 2023. In an effort to keep everyone informed the 2025 real property assessments will increase again but less than in 2024. Inflation in the real estate market and the way the State of Illinois's Department of Revenue (IDOR) Real Property Tax Division conducts their Sale Ratio Study remains the reason for the continued increase in real property assessments. Last year Manhattan Assessments increased due to the I.D.O.R Factor of 9.6%, from the chart above Manhattan has a 6.26% recently revised preliminary factor.

The higher sale prices that we have seen or heard about our friends and neighbors selling their homes over the past several years is what the Illinois Department of Revenue uses to calculate assessment changes each year. This study projects an annual equalization factors that forces assessments to increase or decrease according to the median assessment level in the study that is calculated from each "Market Sale" by dividing the prior year total assessment by the current sale price. Example if a residential property estimated value of \$300,000 it is assessed at 100,000 one third of the value according to the state's mandated level of assessment .3333 but it sells for \$75,000 over the estimated value for \$375,000. The assessment level for this sale is .2676 (100,000 / 375,000) below the State of Illinois mandated median assessment level of .3333 percent of market value. In this study all of the "Market Sale" ratios are ranked from low to high and the middle position of the ranking is used to determine the new assessment year Equalization Factor. As in the example above this is the median level of assessment for Manhattan Township that includes the Village of Manhattan the recently revised Tentative 2024 Median Level of Assessment is .3137. The new Tentative or Preliminary Equalization Factor according to the chart above is calculated as follows: (.3333 / .3137) = 1.0626 meaning Manhattan's Assessed value will increase by over 6 percent in total by applying varying percents as necessary according to value on the real property in our township . Manhattan Township is not unique in Will County the average township increase is approximately 7.19% as noted in the table above.

The Tentative or Preliminary Factor is based on ten months of 2024 sales plus the prior two year averages. The Final Factor will be determined usually around the end of March based on all twelve months of the 2024 sales. However, this year there is a delay being blamed on the new I.D.O.R. software. So the preliminary factors may vary slightly up or down. It will be the Final Factor that assessors must use to meet the amount of assessment increase or decrease as dictated by the Illinois Department of Revenue. The township assessor must increase or decrease the total township assessment value according to the IDOR Final Equalization Factor. If the assessor falls short or goes over by a fractional amount the chief county assessment

official will have any additional or decreased amount applied to all real property in the township.

We might reason that the higher interest rates for home mortgages announced recently will bring real estate prices down? Even if the higher interest rates stay in affect for the next two years and the sale prices do in fact decrease it will take at least that long before those sale prices begin to impact the sale ratio study to drive assessments lower due to the way the state conducts the study. The study is comprised of three sets of three years sale prices so it is not in step with current time the way we may think how each new sale should impact it. Another fact is during this period of high inflation in everything but particularly in the real estate market the taxing bodies listed on your tax bill all were receiving new money particularly if a lot of new construction is taking place that will cause the need for new or expanded services. So now if an area goes into a recession and housing prices begin to fall causing the assessments to follow typically what will happen it will cause the tax rates to increase and the property tax relief that might be expected will fall below expectations.

2025 is not an Illinois Department of Revenue Quad Year. 2023 was an Illinois Department of Revenue's Quadrennial Year the next one will be 2026, meaning all real property parcels in Illinois should be reassessed every four years. This terminology goes back to time where computer aided mass appraisal systems (CAMA Systems) were not in use. In theory larger townships assessors would reassess one forth of their township each year so all parcels would be reassessed in the four year cycle. Since the mid 1990s when computer desktop workstations came into being many assessors review assessments each year in an effort to minimize the IDOR Equalization Factors because we have the ability to do it with our CAMA Systems. Today if the assessors only adjusted assessments on a four year interval the IDOR Equalization Factors would be much larger. I and some others may remember a time in the 1980's when these factors were approximately a thirty percent increase. In an appreciating market for real estate it is logical the factors would compound each year over a four year period of time. This is why I adjust assessments each year.

I agree that in the Cook County Collar County Area Real Estate Taxes are too high. Since about 65% goes for grade school and high school funding, something at a state level could be done but that would be up to the Illinois State Legislature to make some changes. It seems their main approach to rising property taxes is to throw more exemptions at the problem. In my view this is not the best solution because the Tax Rate is determined by the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) of the township divided by the total amount of money {Levy} requested by the taxing bodies in the jurisdiction. Tax Rate equals Levy divided by EAV, more exemptions actually lowers the EAV therefore the tax rate is actually increased.

This year in particular there will be more attorneys advertising to help property owner reduce their real estate taxes by filing an appeal. If they are successful they will take part of any reduction as their fee that is my guess. If you believe your real property assessment is too high and you have evidence to convince the assessor forward that information to me. My email address is manhattantwpassessor@air-wans.com I will review it and get back to you.

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Often I am asked what items are assessed in addition to the house these items are; finished basements, number of plumbing fixtures, number of porches of any size, pergola, if a pergola has a solid covered roof structure instead of open beams it is considered a porch, gazebo, concrete patios of any size, paver type patios of any size, wood decks of any size, composite deck material of any size, in ground swimming pools of any size, sheds over 160 sq. ft., attached garages of any size, and all detached structures except one shed under 160 sq. ft. Large site properties that may have other than typical paved areas such as a long drive to an outbuilding there may be additional value to account for it. Now there is differences in house architecture, quality of material, and construction that must be considered that apply to detached structures as well. All these items plus condition will affect the market value of the property. It does not matter if these items are attached to the house or is built on a skid in place of a foundation, that is a common misconception any improvement on the property typically adds value to the property. I must emphasize that size alone does not make two different structures comparable. The assessor will look for these kinds of differences when comparing one property to another.

The assessor's records are on this web for anyone to inspect them, please call regarding any question. If some accuracy of a measurement is questioned the assessor or someone in the assessor's office may need to make a field visit to the property. The records on this web will show measurements, photos, and the last sale price a home. Please use the information as a guide to determine if your property is fairly assessed. In the event we do not agree you can always hire an attorney if you are unable to file the appeal on your own.

In closing the assessor's office will make on site field inspections for new construction of a home or new improvement to an existing home according to permits we get from Will County for the unincorporated area and the Village of Manhattan. The time frame starts approximately in March weather permitting. It continues through the first two weeks of December again weather permitting. The person I hire to assist in this work must be courteous and respectful of your property. Most of our work can be done outside the home taking measurements and photographs. It is rare that we would ask to measure something inside your home. A few exceptions are a finished basement area, one story section of the home with a two story ceiling so the area is not counted as two stories doubling the sq. ft. of this area, and some garages to determine the size or an attached garage. We do not make appointments for these visits because of the short time frame to complete our work plus the work is completed

outside the house. When there is a locked fence gate preventing the completion of our work or no one is at home we will leave a door card to let the owner we were on site and a note asking the owner to call our office to go over a few details about the interior of the house and to allow the assessor's office access to a locked fence area.

During the months schools are operating our office open hours are Tuesday, and Thursday 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm and by appointment except for holidays. Once school is out office hours will be three days per week with hours to be announced at that time. Myself and my field deputy work many more hours even on the weekends. Telephone calls to office (815) 478-5154 if no one answers your message will go to my email that I check often. Many times I will call after 5:00 pm or on weekends to try to connect with a person to answer their questions. If someone needs to drop off some correspondence to the assessor's office after hours there is a large mail box in front of the Manhattan Township Office Building located at 230 Wabash Street just north of the Ace Hardware Store. I have recently made a request to have another mail box mounted at the side door in our buildings parking area.

Sincerely,

Joe Oldani C.I.A.O.-I

Manhattan Township Assessor