

Dear Residents & Business Owners,

Subject: Important Changes to Your Town of Odessa Property Tax and Trash Bills

We are writing to detail on the adjustments to the Town of Odessa's property tax rates and municipal trash fees for the 2026–2027 fiscal year. Because town tax bills are calculated using New Castle County (NCC) property assessments, the recent county-wide property reassessment will directly impact your upcoming town bill.

Last May, the Mayor and Council voted unanimously to use the older 1983 New Castle County assessment values for one additional year. However, for this upcoming fiscal year, the Town of Odessa is legally required to transition to the new 2024 New Castle County assessed property values to determine our local tax rates.

To ensure a proper and transparent transition, the Town Secretary collaborated with Town Solicitor, Barrett Edwards, to carefully calculate our new rates using the following process:

- **Determining the Revenue-Neutral Rate:** First, we calculated the "roll-back" or revenue-neutral tax rate. This is the rate needed to bring in the exact same amount of property tax revenue as last year (\$51,326.00 total, which came from \$24,239.00 in residential taxes and \$27,087.00 in commercial taxes). Based on the new higher property values, that baseline rate would be \$0.033 per \$100 of assessed value for residential properties, and \$0.1815 per \$100 of assessed value for commercial properties.
- **Addressing the Budget Shortfall:** The town faces an \$11,000 budget shortfall due to rising operational costs. These include increased fees for Jobs for Blue police details, landscaping, contractor services, and banking fees. We also must allocate funds to critical maintenance, such as street and park tree care. To address this, the town needs to capture an average of \$40 more per parcel.
- **Final Approved Tax Rates:** To cover these rising costs, the Council has set the new residential tax rate at **\$0.04 per \$100 of assessed value** (a 22% increase in residential tax revenue) and the new commercial tax rate at **\$0.25 per \$100 of assessed value** (a 38% increase in commercial tax revenue).

How This Affects You

The adjusted tax rates will affect every resident differently. Your specific bill depends entirely on how much your individual property value changed from the old 1983 system to the new 2024 assessment. Because the county changed its valuation, some residents may see their tax bills go up, while others may see them stay the same or decrease.

Please note that the Town of Odessa does not control your property's assessed value. If you believe your new 2024 county assessment is incorrect, you have the right to appeal it directly through New Castle County. You can find official appeal forms and guidelines on the Board of Assessment Review website at:

<https://www.newcastlede.gov/390/Board-of-Assessment-Review>.

Trash Service Fee Adjustments

In addition to the tax rate changes, residents who use the town's municipal trash service will see a \$10.00 increase in their annual trash bill. The Town of Odessa operates under a multi-year municipal contract featuring a sliding price scale that increases each year. Accordingly, the annual fee for once-weekly trash removal and bi-monthly yard waste and recycling services will increase from last year's rate of \$385.00 to **\$395.00** for the upcoming year.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we navigate these required county updates and work to maintain the safety, beauty, and operational integrity of our historic town.

Sincerely,
The Mayor and Council
Town of Odessa