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SDAT Launches New Initiative to Improve Vacant Property Assessments in Baltimore City

BALTIMORE, MD — The Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) has launched a new, targeted initiative to improve the accuracy and consistency of vacant land assessments in Baltimore City, part of a proactive strategy to strengthen equity and fairness in property valuation.

“As part of our continuing mission to improve assessment accuracy, we’re taking meaningful steps in response to feedback from our community and advocacy partners about the valuation of vacant land in Baltimore,” said Bob Yeager, who was appointed Director of SDAT by Governor Moore on July 1. “This initiative is about ensuring assessments reflect the true diversity of Baltimore’s neighborhoods and support equitable and transparent valuations citywide.”

This effort, launched in early July, is currently focused on Group 2, this year’s reassessment area. SDAT’s Real Property Division is actively identifying all unimproved parcels and reviewing recent land sales to align assessed values with current market activity.

“Baltimore is a city where property values can shift significantly block by block,” Yeager added. “That’s why we use neighborhood-based market groupings, which capture a more accurate reflection of local conditions and avoid one-size-fits-all solutions. We’re prioritizing a full review of vacant land in each reassessment cycle.”

Baltimore City presents unique administrative challenges, including reliance on City-supplied property transfer data that often requires extensive manual review. Thus, the Department has developed a multi-year strategy as part of a broader push for comprehensive and transparent assessments.

Key components of the initiative include:

- **Systematic identification of all unimproved parcels** within reassessment areas.
- **Localized analysis of land sales** to ensure neighborhood-based valuation accuracy.
- **Additional data integrity reviews** of sales and property records.

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SDAT emphasizes that its assessors use all available market data, internal valuation tools, and City indicators to ensure valuations are as accurate as possible.

“This is just the beginning of a broader push to improve consistency in Baltimore’s property valuations,” said Yeager. “We’re committed to transparency and continued collaboration with our local partners.”

About SDAT

The Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) is a customer-focused agency responsible for property assessment, business registration, and tax assistance services. SDAT’s mission is to deliver fair and transparent property assessments, foster housing affordability and generational wealth, and support businesses and entrepreneurs across the state.

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