

City of Ocala Non-Ad Valorem Fire Assessment Frequently Asked Questions

QUESTION: What is a non-ad valorem assessment?

ANSWER: A non-ad valorem assessment is a special assessment levied on real property, but which is not based on the value of your property. Non-ad valorem assessments are charged to cover the cost associated with a specific benefit to property. In this case, it is Fire Rescue services.

QUESTION: Why did the City implement the assessment?

ANSWER: The City used to charge a Fire User Fee that was billed on the municipal services bill. The City discontinued collecting that fee in July 2020 due to a legal challenge and implemented the assessment beginning in February 2021. The Fire Assessment revenue is needed to supplement the ad valorem property tax revenue used to fund the rest of Fire Rescue's budget.

QUESTION: How much revenue will the City generate from the assessment?

ANSWER: The City expects to generate up to \$18 million from the assessment for the upcoming fiscal year. Ocala Fire Rescue's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, which is October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024 is roughly \$25.7 million.

QUESTION: Is there another way to generate the revenue needed?

ANSWER: Another option to generate the revenue is through an increase in ad valorem property taxes. However, the advantage of generating the revenue by the Fire Assessment, rather than a property tax increase, is that properties which may be exempt from paying property taxes but benefit from fire protection are still subject to paying the assessment. Therefore, the costs are more equitably spread to all who benefit from Ocala Fire Rescue services. The Fire Assessment will also be a more stable revenue source as it will not fluctuate with property values.

QUESTION: Who is responsible for paying the Fire Assessment?

ANSWER: Assessments are the responsibility of the owner(s) of the property subject to the assessment. So, each property owner will pay the assessment in a fashion like paying their property taxes. The City does not charge Fire Assessments to renters, lessees, or other non-owners of the property.

QUESTION: How will the Fire Assessment be billed?

ANSWER: The Fire Assessment will be billed on the annual property tax bill sent by the Marion County Tax Collector in November of each year.

QUESTION: If I do not pay taxes now due to the homestead exemption or other exemptions, will I have to pay the special assessment?

ANSWER: Yes. Special assessments are legally different than taxes. The Fire Assessment applies to all residential and all non-residential property uses, regardless of homestead or other exemption status. It also applies to vacant land.

QUESTION: How was my rate determined?

ANSWER: The City used an outside consultant, Benesch, Inc. to conduct a Fire Assessment study to determine eligible costs that could be recovered through a fire assessment. The study findings were updated in June 2023. Residential and non-residential property rates are tiered based on square footage while vacant parcel rates are flat.

QUESTION: Why is my rate different from last year?
ANSWER: The proposed rates increased over last year to cover a larger portion of the Fire Department's eligible budget.

QUESTION: How was my property information (square footage, mailing address, owner name, etc.) obtained?
ANSWER: This information was obtained from the Marion County Property Appraiser's database. Any corrections to this information should be directed to that office at 352-368-8300.

QUESTION: What if my mortgage company pays my taxes?
ANSWER: The Fire Assessment will be on the same bill as the property taxes and should be sent to and paid by the mortgage company if the property owner(s) pays property taxes through escrow. But you are still responsible for paying the Fire Assessment if your mortgage company does not pay.

QUESTION: When do taxes become delinquent?
ANSWER: Taxes and assessment become delinquent on April 1. On or after April 1, the amount due is determined by the date your payment is **RECEIVED** by the Tax Collector's Office, not the postmark date.

QUESTION: What happens if I don't pay the Fire Assessment?
ANSWER: Florida law requires that ad valorem taxes and assessments on the tax bill be paid at the same time. Failure to pay your full tax bill will result in additional fees, interest, and penalties and the Tax Collector issuing a tax certificate against your property which can result in loss of title to the affected property.

QUESTION: What is the mailing address for payments?
ANSWER: The remittance address for payments is as follows:
George Albright
503 SE 25th Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

QUESTION: What if I never received a tax bill?
ANSWER: If you do not receive a tax bill in November, contact the Marion County Tax Collector's Office at 352-368-8200. It is the responsibility of each taxpayer to ensure that taxes are paid, regardless of whether a tax notice is received or not.

Additional resources:

Current Tax Questions: <https://www.mariontax.com/current-tax-questions>

Delinquent Tax Questions: <https://www.mariontax.com/delinquent-tax-questions>

FIRE ASSESSMENT

Fire Assessment		FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025
Residential			
Single Family/Mobile Home/Duplex Tiering			
1 - 1,000 sf	Per Unit	276.33	276.33
1,001 - 1,600 sf	Per Unit	313.20	313.20
1,601 - 2,500 sf	Per Unit	364.15	364.15
> 2,500 sf	Per Unit	453.06	453.06
Multi-Family Tiering			
1 - 1,000 sf	Per Unit	249.73	249.73
1,001 - 1,200 sf	Per Unit	263.41	263.41
> 1,200 sf	Per Unit	279.70	279.70
Non-Residential			
Commercial			
0 - 2,000 sf	Per Parcel	260.00	260.00
2,001 - 3,000 sf	Per Parcel	650.00	650.00
3,001 - 4,000 sf	Per Parcel	910.00	910.00
4,001 - 5,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,170.00	1,170.00
5,001 - 6,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,430.00	1,430.00
6,001 - 7,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,690.00	1,690.00
7,001 - 8,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,950.00	1,950.00
8,001 - 10,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,340.00	2,340.00
10,001 - 12,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,860.00	2,860.00
12,001 - 14,000 sf	Per Parcel	3,380.00	3,380.00
14,001 - 16,000 sf	Per Parcel	3,900.00	3,900.00
16,001 - 18,000 sf	Per Parcel	4,420.00	4,420.00
18,001 - 20,000 sf	Per Parcel	4,940.00	4,940.00
20,001 - 25,000 sf	Per Parcel	5,850.00	5,850.00
25,001 - 30,000 sf	Per Parcel	7,150.00	7,150.00
30,001 - 35,000 sf	Per Parcel	8,450.00	8,450.00
35,001 - 40,000 sf	Per Parcel	9,750.00	9,750.00
40,001 - 45,000 sf	Per Parcel	11,050.00	11,050.00
45,001 - 50,000 sf	Per Parcel	12,350.00	12,350.00
50,001 - 60,000 sf	Per Parcel	14,300.00	14,300.00
60,001 - 70,000 sf	Per Parcel	16,900.00	16,900.00
70,001 - 80,000 sf	Per Parcel	19,500.00	19,500.00
80,001 - 90,000 sf	Per Parcel	22,100.00	22,100.00
90,001 - 100,000 sf	Per Parcel	24,700.00	24,700.00
100,001 - 120,000 sf	Per Parcel	28,600.00	28,600.00
120,001 - 140,000 sf	Per Parcel	33,800.00	33,800.00
140,001 - 160,000 sf	Per Parcel	39,000.00	39,000.00
160,001 - 180,000 sf	Per Parcel	44,200.00	44,200.00
180,001 - 200,000 sf	Per Parcel	49,400.00	49,400.00
200,001 - 250,000 sf	Per Parcel	58,500.00	58,500.00
250,001 - 300,000 sf	Per Parcel	71,500.00	71,500.00
300,001 or more sf	Per Parcel	78,000.00	78,000.00

FIRE ASSESSMENT

Fire Assessment		FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025
Industrial/Warehouse			
0 - 2,000 sf	Per Parcel	143.00	143.00
2,001 - 3,000 sf	Per Parcel	357.50	357.50
3,001 - 4,000 sf	Per Parcel	500.50	500.50
4,001 - 5,000 sf	Per Parcel	643.50	643.50
5,001 - 6,000 sf	Per Parcel	786.50	786.50
6,001 - 7,000 sf	Per Parcel	929.50	929.50
7,001 - 8,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,072.50	1,072.50
8,001 - 10,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,287.00	1,287.00
10,001 - 12,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,573.00	1,573.00
12,001 - 14,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,859.00	1,859.00
14,001 - 16,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,145.00	2,145.00
16,001 - 18,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,431.00	2,431.00
18,001 - 20,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,717.00	2,717.00
20,001 - 25,000 sf	Per Parcel	3,217.50	3,217.50
25,001 - 30,000 sf	Per Parcel	3,932.50	3,932.50
30,001 - 35,000 sf	Per Parcel	4,647.50	4,647.50
35,001 - 40,000 sf	Per Parcel	5,362.50	5,362.50
40,001 - 45,000 sf	Per Parcel	6,077.50	6,077.50
45,001 - 50,000 sf	Per Parcel	6,792.50	6,792.50
50,001 - 60,000 sf	Per Parcel	7,865.00	7,865.00
60,001 - 70,000 sf	Per Parcel	9,295.00	9,295.00
70,001 - 80,000 sf	Per Parcel	10,725.00	10,725.00
80,001 - 90,000 sf	Per Parcel	12,155.00	12,155.00
90,001 - 100,000 sf	Per Parcel	13,585.00	13,585.00
100,001 - 120,000 sf	Per Parcel	15,730.00	15,730.00
120,001 - 140,000 sf	Per Parcel	18,590.00	18,590.00
140,001 - 160,000 sf	Per Parcel	21,450.00	21,450.00
160,001 - 180,000 sf	Per Parcel	24,310.00	24,310.00
180,001 - 200,000 sf	Per Parcel	27,170.00	27,170.00
200,001 - 250,000 sf	Per Parcel	32,175.00	32,175.00
250,001 - 300,000 sf	Per Parcel	39,325.00	39,325.00
300,001 or more sf	Per Parcel	42,900.00	42,900.00
Institutional			
0 - 2,000 sf	Per Parcel	170.00	170.00
2,001 - 3,000 sf	Per Parcel	425.00	425.00
3,001 - 4,000 sf	Per Parcel	595.00	595.00
4,001 - 5,000 sf	Per Parcel	765.00	765.00
5,001 - 6,000 sf	Per Parcel	935.00	935.00
6,001 - 7,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,105.00	1,105.00
7,001 - 8,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,275.00	1,275.00
8,001 - 10,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,530.00	1,530.00
10,001 - 12,000 sf	Per Parcel	1,870.00	1,870.00
12,001 - 14,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,210.00	2,210.00
14,001 - 16,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,550.00	2,550.00

FIRE ASSESSMENT

Fire Assessment		FY 2023-2024	FY 2024-2025
16,001 - 18,000 sf	Per Parcel	2,890.00	2,890.00
18,001 - 20,000 sf	Per Parcel	3,230.00	3,230.00
20,001 - 25,000 sf	Per Parcel	3,825.00	3,825.00
25,001 - 30,000 sf	Per Parcel	4,675.00	4,675.00
30,001 - 35,000 sf	Per Parcel	5,525.00	5,525.00
35,001 - 40,000 sf	Per Parcel	6,375.00	6,375.00
40,001 - 45,000 sf	Per Parcel	7,225.00	7,225.00
45,001 - 50,000 sf	Per Parcel	8,075.00	8,075.00
50,001 - 60,000 sf	Per Parcel	9,350.00	9,350.00
60,001 - 70,000 sf	Per Parcel	11,050.00	11,050.00
70,001 - 80,000 sf	Per Parcel	12,750.00	12,750.00
80,001 - 90,000 sf	Per Parcel	14,450.00	14,450.00
90,001 - 100,000 sf	Per Parcel	16,150.00	16,150.00
100,001 - 120,000 sf	Per Parcel	18,700.00	18,700.00
120,001 - 140,000 sf	Per Parcel	22,100.00	22,100.00
140,001 - 160,000 sf	Per Parcel	25,500.00	25,500.00
160,001 - 180,000 sf	Per Parcel	28,900.00	28,900.00
180,001 - 200,000 sf	Per Parcel	32,300.00	32,300.00
200,001 - 250,000 sf	Per Parcel	38,250.00	38,250.00
250,001 - 300,000 sf	Per Parcel	46,750.00	46,750.00
300,001 or more sf	Per Parcel	51,000.00	51,000.00
Vacant Land			
Vacant Land	Per Parcel	55.69	55.69
Designates Fee/Rate Changes			