

A THOUGHTFUL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

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LEGAL 
SEMINAR
NAVIGATING CHANGE



WHAT IS THE COOK COUNTY BOARD OF REVIEW?

- A three-member elected board
- The final county level authority on property assessments
- Independent from the Assessor, who values property via mass appraisal
- Reviews property assessments individually
- **The Board of Review can lower property tax assessment values.**



A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption Roadmap



CURRENT Illinois HOMEOWNERS

QUALIFYING EXEMPTIONS

Home Improvement Exemptions

Low Income Senior Freeze



General Homestead Exemptions



Senior Exemptions



CURRENT Illinois HOMEOWNERS

QUALIFYING EXEMPTIONS

Persons with Disabilities Exemption

Long-Time Homeowner Exemption



Veterans with Disabilities Exemption



Historic Residence Assessment Freeze

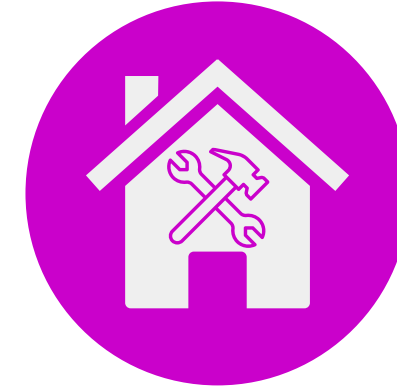


EXEMPTIONS



General Homestead

- Homeowner must own and occupy the property as their principal residence as of January 1 of the tax year.
- The General Homestead Exemption in Cook County is \$10,000 Equalized Assessed Value.



Home Improvement

- Exempts from taxation increases in assessed value
- from improvements to a owner-occupied principal residence
 - up to \$75,000
 - up to four years

EXEMPTIONS



Historic Residence Assessment Freeze

Provides an eight-year freeze on the assessed value of historic owner-occupied residences following rehabilitation, gradually bringing the value back to market level. To qualify, a property must be a certified historic structure, undergo a rehabilitation exceeding 25% of its market value, and meet state rehabilitation standards.



Long-Time Homeowner Exemption

This exemption provides homeowners with an expanded Homeowner Exemption with no maximum exemption amount. In addition to meeting income and residency requirements, applicants must also have a significant assessment increase that exceeds the maximum amounts set by the state legislature. ***Less than 2% of Cook County homeowners qualify for this exemption. The Assessor will directly mail eligible homeowners.***

EXEMPTIONS



Senior Homestead

- Must meet the requirements for the Homeowner Exemption
- and be 65 years of age or older during the tax year.
- The Senior Citizens Homestead Exemption in Cook County is \$8,000 Equalized Assessed Value and is in addition to the General Homestead Exemption.



Low Income Senior Freeze

- Must meet the requirements for the Senior Exemption and
- have a total household annual income of \$65,000 or less.
- This exemption “freezes” the property’s taxable value the year that the property owner qualifies.
- This exemption is in addition to the senior exemption and the homestead exemption.

EXEMPTIONS



Persons with Disabilities

- Provides a reduction of \$2,000 in Equalized Assessed Value.
- The property owner must be disabled (not just a household member) during the tax year to qualify for this exemption.



Veterans with Disabilities

- Provides veterans with a service-connected disability as certified by the U.S Department of Veteran Affairs with a reduction in the equalized assessed value of their property.

Where does exemption legislation take a wrong turn?

- Unfunded Mandates
 - Unintended Consequences
 - Unclear Language
 - Overly broad or narrow scope
- Lack of Implementation RoadMap
 - Timing, Rollout, processes
 - Insufficient Communication
 - Competing Interests

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

What wrong turns have you seen?



A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

HB 2507 Property Tax Omnibus Bill Fails - SHEVD

- Adding a 100% property tax exemption for Veterans of WWII to the SHEVD, effective for the 2023 (payable 2024) tax year;
- Revising the SHEVD to make homes with assessed values of \$250,000 (\$750,000 fair cash value) eligible for an exemption of \$250,000, effective for the 2024 (payable 2025) tax year;
- Eliminating the requirement of an honorable discharge for the SHEVD, effective for the 2024 (payable 2025) tax year;
- Creating a new 50% exemption to surviving spouses of first responders, effective for the 2024 (payable 2025) tax year;

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

HB 2507 Property Tax Omnibus Bill Fails - Other

- Creating a preferential assessment procedure for non-profit Regional Wastewater Treatment Facilities, effective for the 2024 (payable 2025) tax year.
- Excluding property tax extensions made by park districts for aquarium and museum purposes from being subject to the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL), effective immediately;
- Creates a new maximum tax rate for park districts for aquarium and museum purposes, effective immediately;
- Provides a new referendum method for increasing a tax levy under PTELL, effective immediately;

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

HB 2507 Property Tax Omnibus Bill Fails - Other

- Providing that Townships with populations between 1,000 and 2,999 residents (currently, fewer than 1,000 residents) must be grouped into a Multi-Township Assessment District and elect a single Assessor, effective with the first election after the 2030 decennial census;
- Creating a new ten-year homestead exemption for single-family homes built by a municipality on exempt municipal-owned land that was then sold to owner occupants (subject to County Board approval in all counties with fewer than 3,000,000 residents), effective for the 2024 (payable 2025) tax year.

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

HB 2507 Property Tax Omnibus Bill Fails – Cook Co.

- Requiring Cook County to value nursing homes and residential mental health facilities in the same classification as residential properties, effective immediately.



A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

HB 2507 Property Tax Omnibus Bill Fails – Cook Co.

Governor **did not** sign.

Why???



A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

SB 1957 - SHVD

The SHVD

- auto-renews if the qualifying veteran is deemed permanently and totally disabled by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- provides for the surviving spouse of a deceased veteran to continue to receive the exemption earned and applied for by the veteran

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

SB 1957 – Homestead Exemptions

The General & Senior Homestead in collar counties bordering Cook County

- Maximum \$8,000 (up from \$6,000 & \$5,000)

Low Income Senior Freeze

- seniors who receive SNAP or LILHEAP benefits to automatically qualify for the senior freeze and decreases the Senior Citizen Real Estate Tax Deferral program interest rate from 6% to 3%.

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

SB 1957 – PTELL (Property Tax Extension Limitation law)

By allowing taxing districts subject to the Property Tax Extension Law Limit (PTELL) to levy less today without losing access to additional property tax revenues in the future, SB 1975 incentivizes taxing districts to opt for the lowest necessary property tax rate – saving property taxpayers hundreds of dollars in savings in property taxes on an annual basis

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Legislative Path: From Idea to Impact

Standard Homestead Exemption for Veterans with Disability

Equalized assessed value of \$250,000

- Cook interpreted up to and levied tax on EAV over \$250,000
- 101 other counties considered the EAV must be below \$250,000,
Full tax levied on Homes with EAV over \$250,000

Recent legislation corrected this issue and all counties now use the Cook method.

A Thoughtful Property Tax Exemption

Exemption Requirements are uniform throughout the State, however, the burden-shift created by exemptions differs.



Roadside Assistance



Exemptions are created to lessen the tax burden on certain portions of the population. But, just like a map, if a person doesn't read it, they will miss their exit.

In order for an exemption program to be successful, a properly executed Communication roadmap is key!

Roadside Assistance

Identify intended targets

- Public
- Government
 - Decision makers
 - End-Users
- News



Roadside Assistance

Allocate Resources

- Marketing/Communications Staff
 - Current job posting
- Communication Mediums
 - Social Media: LinkedIn, Facebook, etc
 - Newsletter
 - Print
 - Constant contact
- Outreach Events



Roadside Assistance

Address language barriers

- Employ multi-lingual staff
- Translation Services
 - Printed materials
 - Language Line
 - Phone
 - In person
 - Website

The screenshot displays the website for the Cook County Board of Review. At the top left is the Cook County Seal. The header includes the text "Cook County Illinois BOARD OF REVIEW" and a description: "The Board of Review is a government office that provides the taxpayers of Cook County an opportunity to appeal the over-valuation of property assessments". Navigation links for "Commissioner George A. Cardenas" and "Commissioner Samantha Steele" are visible. A search bar is present with the text "BOR Portal Login | Submit an Appeal". A language selection dropdown menu is open, showing options: English, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Chinese (Traditional), Polish, Spanish, Filipino, Urdu, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, and German. A green checkmark icon and a link "Click Here for Public Meeting Notices" are also visible. The main content area features a large banner with the text "BOARD OF REVIEW" and "FILE AN APPEAL".

Roadside Assistance

DETOUR – Budget is running on fumes

- Resources for those with limited budgets - STEAL IT!
Imitation is the BEST form of flattery

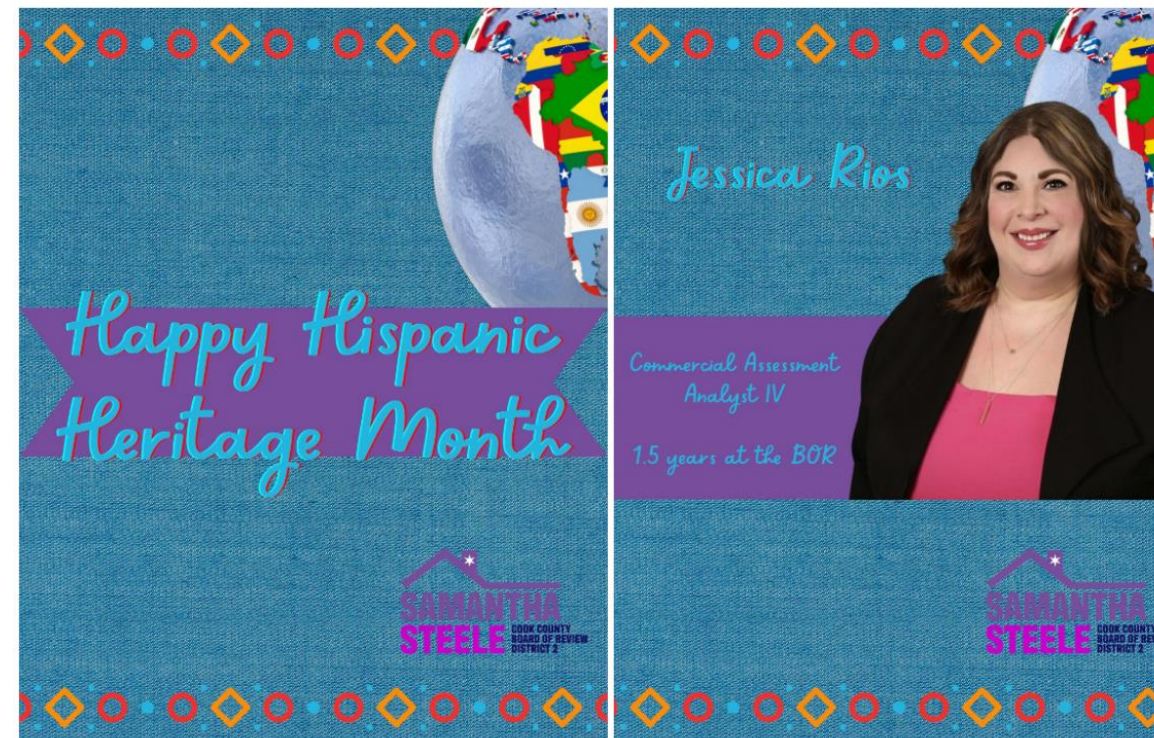


Samantha Steele (She/Her) • 1st
Commissioner, Cook County Board of Review
1w • 🌐

This Hispanic Heritage Month, District 2 at the Cook County Board of Review celebrates the rich cultural heritage and invaluable contributions of Hispanic Americans to our community. From business owners to civic leaders, Hispanic residents help make Cook County vibrant and diverse. We're committed to ensuring a fair and equitable property tax appeal process for all residents.

Look to the second photo to meet one of our Spanish-speaking analysts, Jessica!

[#HispanicHeritageMonth](#)



Roadside Assistance



Plainfield Township Assessor's Of...

71 followers
5mo •

The 2024 Renewal Applications have been mailed. Taxpayers needing assistance completing the applications may visit the Plainfield Township Assessor's Office during regular office hours. M-F 8am-4pm. No appointment is needed.

Alternatively, taxpayers may attend the open house Exemption Event on June 17th at the Community Center.



THE WILL COUNTY SUPERVISOR OF ASSESSMENTS OFFICE INVITES YOU...

2024 EXEMPTION EVENT

Come see one of our exemption specialists to assist you with:

- **Low Income Senior Citizen Assessment Freeze**- total household income of \$65,000 or less
- **Senior Homestead**- 65 years and older
- **Disabled Person**
- **Disabled Veteran**- service connected



PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER

15014 S DES PLAINES ST
PLAINFIELD, IL 60544

**JUNE 17, 2024
10 AM - 2 PM**

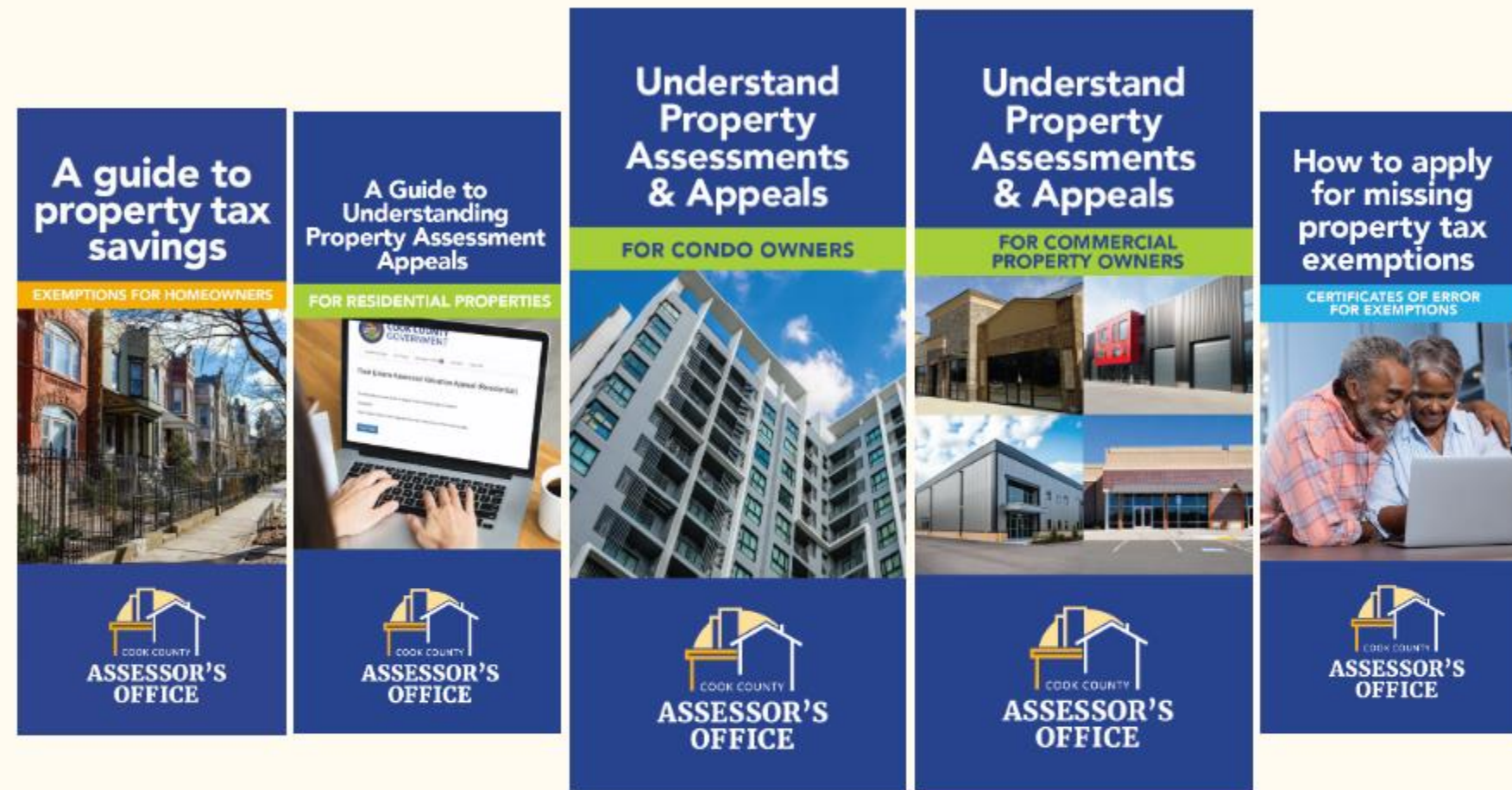
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 815-740-4648 OR VISIT
WWW.WILLCOUNTYSOA.COM

Imitation is the BEST form of flattery!

- *Follow other jurisdictions for ideas*

Roadside Assistance

Flyers in print and available for download!



English
Spanish
Polish
Simplified Chinese
Tagalog
Arabic

English
Spanish
Polish
Simplified Chinese
Tagalog
Arabic

English
Additional languages
coming soon!

English
Additional languages
coming soon!

English
Spanish
Polish
Simplified Chinese
Tagalog
Arabic

The Cook County Assessor's office was the 2021 Recipient of the IAAO Public Information Program Award!

Roadside Assistance

Outreach

Outreach Information



15 total BOR District 2
Community Outreach
Events for Appeal Year
2023

27 total BOR District 2 Community
Analyst Days for Appeal Year 2023

1,988+ taxpayers assisted at BOR
District 2 Outreach Events for Appeal Year
2023

1,053+ appeals filed at BOR District
2 Outreach Events for Appeal Year 2023

District 2 assistance is available to all or
portions (P) of the following townships:

- Jefferson
- Lakeview
- Elk Grove (P)
- Niles
- North Chicago
- Northfield
- Evanston
- Leyden (P)
- Rogers Park
- Norwood Park
- Wheeling (P)
- West Chicago (P)
- Maine
- New Trier

Roadside Assistance

DEAD END – Wrong Way

Technological advancements allow for jurisdictions to employ exemption auditing software to ensure exemption benefits are only received by properties that meet local requirements.



Cook County Working Group



PTAX
PROPERTY TAX
REFORM GROUP



Chicago Metropolitan
Agency for Planning



**GOVERNMENT FINANCE
RESEARCH CENTER**



IAAO

- In tax year 2021, exemptions removed nearly 8 percent (\$16.7 billion) from Cook County's property tax base, also known as the equalized assessed value (EAV) of taxed properties.
- General homestead exemption accounts for approximately 4.8% (\$10.2 billion)
- Senior homestead exemption and senior freeze at a combined 2.7%
- In both dollar value and proportion of EAV, exemptions are more prevalent in suburban Cook County than in Chicago.

How do exemptions impact tax rates?

Fig. 1: Change in composite tax rate due to homestead exemptions, tax year 2021, in percentage points

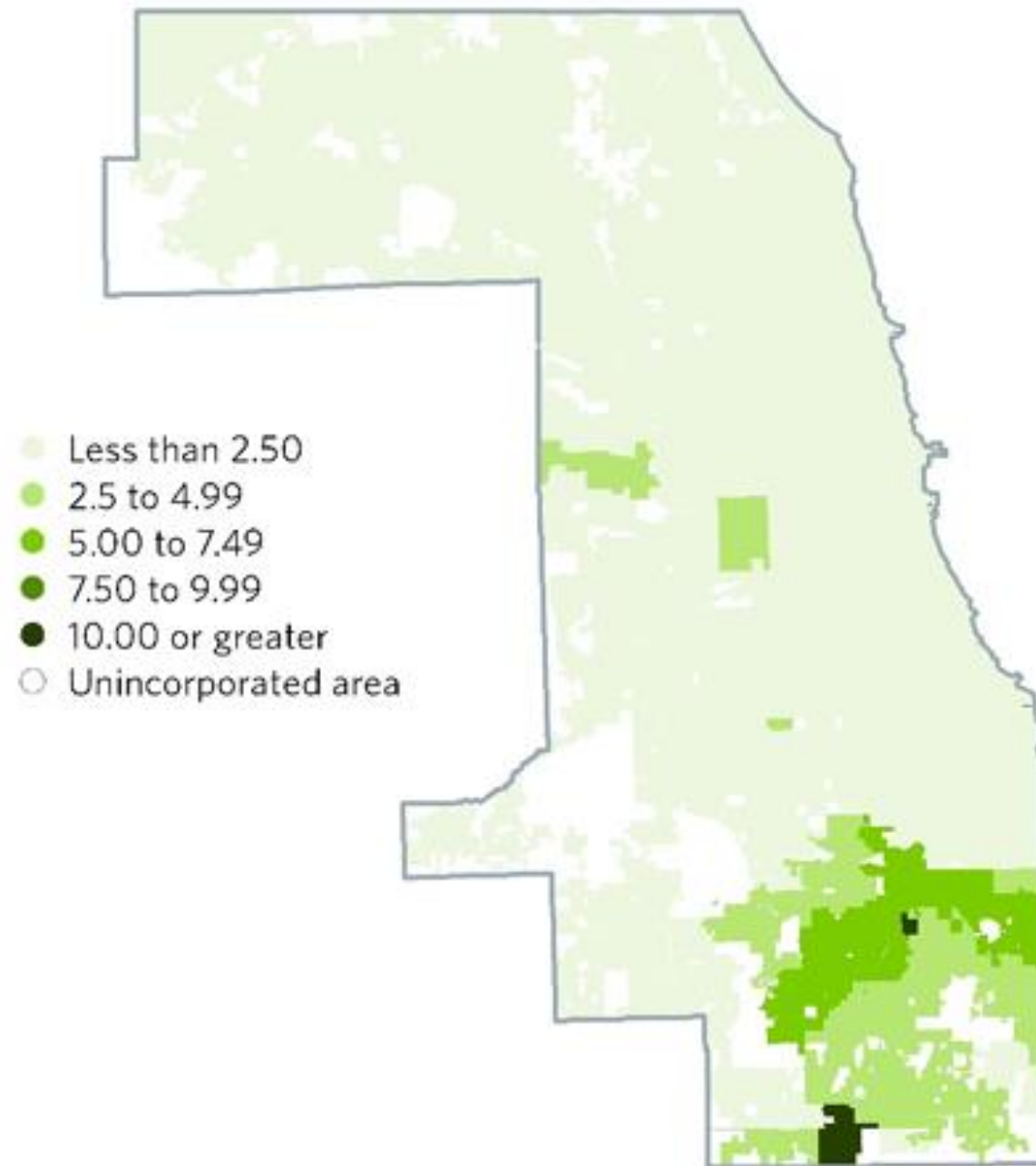
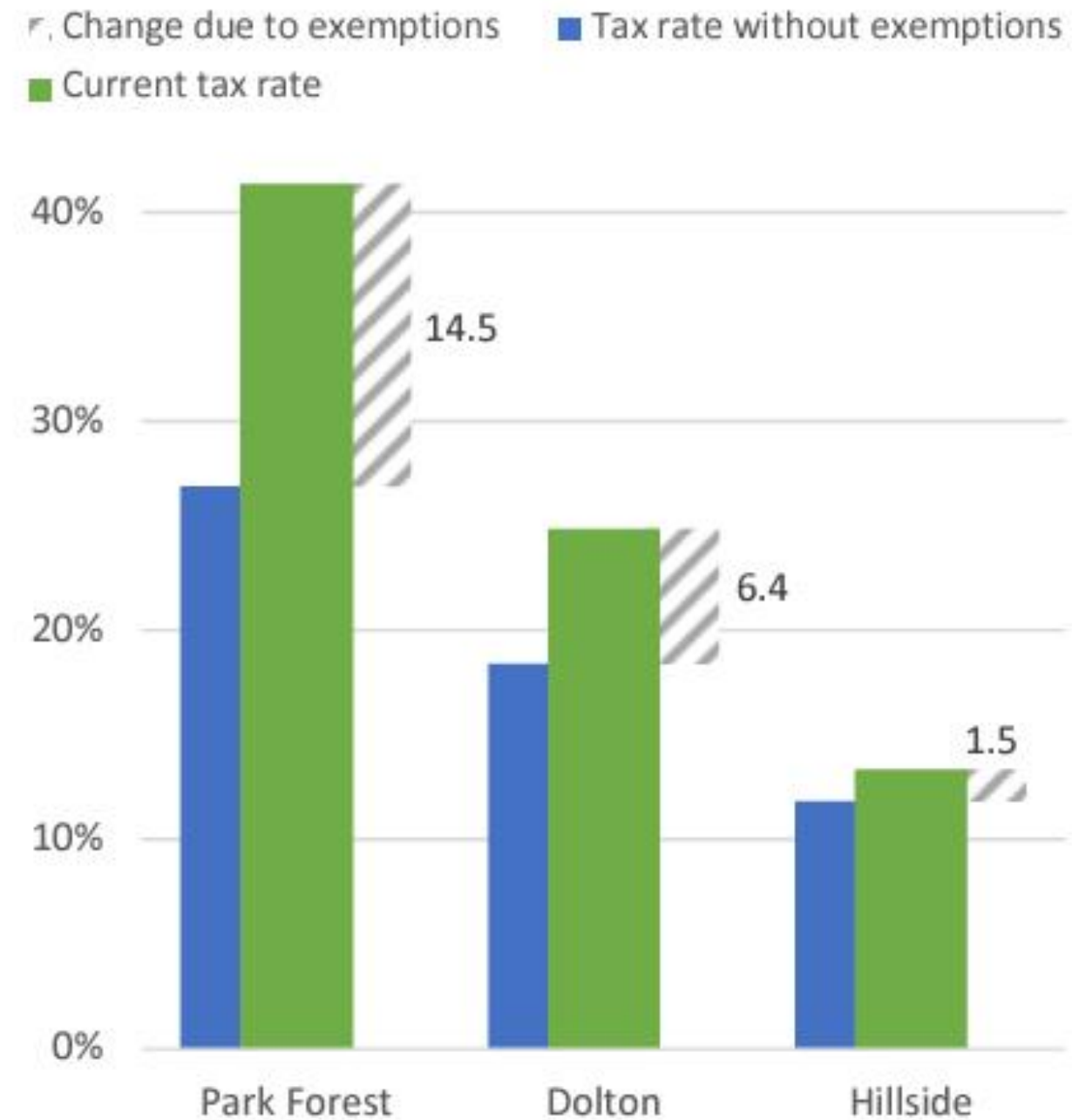


Fig. 2: Composite property tax rates with and without homestead exemptions, tax year 2021



Shaping the future of Cook County's homestead exemptions

Despite the drawbacks, homestead exemptions can be designed to support public goals like lowering local tax bills, improving tax progressivity, sheltering people at risk, and promoting redevelopment. To ensure these tools are fit for purpose, Cook County could take three broad courses of action:

Shaping the future of Cook County's homestead exemptions

- **Enhancing to future legislative proposals:** Encouraging lawmakers to include public purpose statements, performance measures, and evaluation requirements to improve the use of exemptions over time.
- **Funding homestead exemptions differently:** Considering alternative funding mechanisms to limit unwanted effects and provide greater savings where local tax rates would otherwise climb sharply.
- **Targeting aid through program designs:** Reforming the design of homestead exemptions and pursuing alternatives to prioritize relief for disinvested communities and offset their impact on local jurisdictions.

NON- HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS

**A Hospital, a Government Agency and a Church
walked into the BOR...**

OTHER EXEMPTIONS

Government Property

- Charitable work must be the organization's primary purpose
- Documented evidence of fee waivers for those who cannot afford a charge for charity service is required
- Educational/school property
- Governmental exemption petition required

Religious Property

- Ministers' homes are taxable unless there is a requirement to live in the residence as a condition of employment
- Housing as part of compensation is taxable

Non-profit 501(c)(3)

- Same charitable guidelines apply

EXEMPTION POLICIES & RULES

Intervention

- If controversy is \$100,000+ AV, any taxpayer or taxing body seeking intervention shall file with the Clerk of the Board on or before 14 days from receiving Notice from applicant seeking reduction
- If controversy is \$100,000 AV or less, any taxpayer or taxing body seeking intervention shall file with the Clerk of the Board on or before 14 days from the date of closing of the installment period.
- These rules may be waived in the event of "good cause."

NEXT STEPS

- Exemptions are reviewed on a case by case basis
- BOR adjustment is recommended to Illinois Department of Revenue
- IDOR makes final recommendation for approval



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THANK YOU