

To County Council Members:

I am unable to attend in person, but wish to make my voice heard about the on the proposed property tax increase .

I have lived in the County since 1980, at my current address since 1986. I have reviewed assessment records from 2011, County tax rates and State and local property taxes since 2018. Since 2011, the assessed value has risen on average 1.89% (range 0 to 3.36%) each year. The County property tax rate has increased by an average of 0.67% per year (range -0.12% to 4.91%), and actual tax (after the County credit) by 5.16% per year (range -1.45% to 14.5%). (Waste and water charges have risen 40% since 2018.) As you can see from the chart the tax has risen faster than assessments. (to make the lines show, I've divided assessments by 100 and multiplied tax rate by 1000)

I think it disingenuous to argue that the tax rate is steady while ignoring the almost routine rise in assessments, leading to higher property taxes. I think you should focus your tax increases on income, ideally by raising the upper tax bracket and rates, but absent state cooperation, the county portion of the income tax. Or somehow accommodate people who have lived in the same house for a long time rather than forcing them to sell.

The huge numbers of apartments and town homes rising near the Metro stops is an efficient way to minimize infrastructure costs, but I see large developments away from public transportation and far from the center of the County. I'd like to see how builders are underwriting the costs of infrastructure for these new homes (and families), such as utilities, roads, and schools.

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