

Comparable Sales

The law states that the assessment on a property is presumed to be correct unless the petitioner provides credible evidence that proves the assessment is incorrect. In most cases evidence must be in the form of sales between a willing buyer and a willing seller that took place between October 1, 2015 and October 1, 2016 (for appeals of 2017 assessments). Sales occurring before October 1, 2015 or after October 1, 2016 may be considered, but will be given less weight. You should have at least 3 sales and can provide as many as 5. The quality of the sales is more important than the number, but it is unlikely that a single sale would be sufficient.

Be Familiar with your Comparable Sales

Unless you are using a licensed appraiser who will testify at your hearing, you should be familiar with the comparable sales you are using as evidence. They should be located in your neighborhood or another neighborhood that is similar to your neighborhood. The property should be of similar size and condition to your property and the lot on which is located should be of similar size and quality to yours. As stated above, the sale should have taken place between October 1, 2015 and October 1, 2016. Sales outside that period may be considered, particularly if you have also provided sales within the time period that are consistent.

Verify Sales

It is also important that you verify that the sales you are using are sales between a willing buyer and a willing seller. The State of New Jersey has 33 classifications of Non Usable Sales. If you use the website listed below or the sales records in our office or your assessor's office you will see a notation of NU (Non Usable) followed by a number. The following link is a:

[List of non-usable codes and what they mean](#)

It is possible that some of these sales may be usable if you can present credible evidence that they were between a willing buyer and willing seller, but generally, foreclosures, short sales and other distress sales cannot be used. Assessors usually know which sales are valid, but it is possible that sales listed on the website or in our offices have or will be subsequently reviewed by the New Jersey Division of Taxation and have their classification changed.

Sources for Comparable Sales

There are several sources for comparable sales, most of which are free. We are not able to recommend any particular source and the fact that one is listed below does not constitute a recommendation or any guarantee of accuracy or completeness. There are also other sites and sources that provide accurate and usable information.

1. If you live in a condominium or an area with a homeowners association, the condominium association or homeowners association may have a list of property sales.
2. A real estate agent from your area may have information on sales you can use
3. The following website has a list of all sales using data supplied by the State of New Jersey:

[Comparable Sales Lookup](#)

It permits you to enter search criteria to narrow your search. It should be noted that this information is sometimes not up to date and the accuracy cannot be guaranteed. See the paragraph **Verify Sales**, above.

4. You may visit your town's assessor's office, which has the same records as the County Board of Taxation, but the deeds are usually in order by block and lot, which may simplify your search. For your assessor's telephone number and address see the document [Atlantic County Assessors and Collectors](#) on the Board of Taxation web page.
5. You may visit the County Board of Taxation office in Mays Landing and examine sales records, but the records are in order by the date the deed is recorded, not by date of sale or location, which means that you will have to examine all sales to find the ones you need.
6. If you are unable to find comparable sales, there are many companies that will do the research for you for a modest charge, but some of these firms are not familiar with the requirements for usable sales or provide sales based upon zip codes. Also, please be advised that some firms are charging excessive fees for inaccurate information. It is important that you deal with a reputable firm and verify that the properties are similar to yours and that the sale is usable.
7. You may wish to hire an attorney who will retain a licensed real estate appraiser, or hire a real estate appraiser yourself. Most real estate agents or Realtors are **not** licensed real estate appraisers. Note that if your property is owned by a trust, estate, corporation, limited liability company or other similar entity, you can not represent yourself. Only an attorney authorized to practice law in the State of New Jersey may represent such entities.

Unlike all other sources, a real estate appraiser licensed by the State of New Jersey or a municipal assessor can use sales of property that do not have a similar location or similar physical qualities to your property. They are permitted, provided they have adequate basis to do so, to adjust the sale price to reflect differences in size, location, date of sale or other qualities.