

FRANKLIN COUNTY AUDITOR'S OFFICE

2021 POLICY PRIORITIES



PROPERTY TAX RELIEF AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

- Property tax is an important revenue stream but can be an excessive burden on residents.
- Value change and new levies can cause spikes in property tax that are difficult, particularly for those with fixed incomes.
- The FCAO seeks legislation that provides relief for burdened homeowners and residents while maintaining critical support for local government.
- Action for property tax relief can also include expanding the homestead exemption to help older adults age in the right place.



RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TAX'S TAX EQUALIZATION DIVISION (DTE)

- DTE does not have the resources and tools to timely and accurately analyze property values for residential and particularly, commercial and industrial property.
- The division's over-reliance on hard copies of records and out-of-date technology undermines confidence in their approval or disapproval of county appraised values.
- Current appropriation levels are at approximately 50% of just a few years ago. The operating budget is the best opportunity to address this issue.



TAX INCENTIVE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Abatements and tax increment financing can be useful for economic development when targeted well and not simply used as a means to avoid taxation or fund projects that would occur regardless.
- The FCAO joins the County Commissioners Association of Ohio in its request for more local control for approval of larger incentives, including at the county level.
- Maintain and support incentives that actually contribute to the community as promised.
- Tax Incentive Review Committees need better tools and enforcement options to hold accountable those who benefit from incentives.



FLEXIBLE AND COMPASSIONATE DOG LICENSING LAWS





- Counties should have the flexibility to create alternate licensing fees and license issuing for lower income pet owners.
- Updates and clarifications are warranted regarding the licensure of service and rescue group animals.



ADDITIONAL WAYS TO SUPPORT BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS

- Clarify the status of short-term rentals in terms of property classification and tax.
- Review the existing options to redact names from property records for consistency and clarity.
- Review appraisal certification and contracting standards to increase options for county auditors and support recruitment and diversity in the field.
- Technical and clarifying changes on when certain notices or county auditor decisions must be sent.

COMMIT TO AN AGENDA FOR CHANGE

-  **Maintain local government funding and support and find means to replace lost revenue including full reimbursement for indigent defense.**
-  **Adopt “Racism is a Public Health Crisis” resolution and consider diversity and inclusion in all policies.**
-  **Increase threshold for county government bidding requirements from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and recognize unique features of software-as-a-service purchasing.**
-  **Require reporting of property interest transfers for purposes of the transfer tax and property appraisal.**