

Careers in City Government

City Assessor

Kevin Ternes, Minot, ND
Population: 40,888

What are your duties and responsibilities as Assessor of your city?

An assessor has to be familiar with real estate, construction, statistics, an expert in real property prices in their community, and be able to multi task numerous duties at once. There are deadlines to meet and meetings to be held that will concentrate on explaining last year's real estate market and how it translates into the following year's assessments. An assessor is basically an appraiser who not only does appraisal of property for property tax calculations, but also must make sure those appraisals are consistent across similar neighborhoods and the community. An assessor in a larger city must also be a manager who can delegate workloads and projects to other team members.

What type of education and/or training is required for your position?

A business degree is very important or something related. I would suggest Economics as a minor or concentration. Classes in statistics or real estate would also be beneficial. A real estate appraiser's license would be a very good foundation.

What is the most rewarding aspect of your position?

If you like working with the public, you will enjoy the day-to-day contact. You will be up-to-date on all development and construction in your city/county. You will also enjoy the challenges of using research, statistics and field inspections to estimate the valuation of real property and then be able to compare your appraisal work to actual selling prices.

What advice would you give someone that is interested in working in city government?

There is no doubt the general public has become more demanding, in some ways more knowledgeable, but also less patient. Customers are used to instant information and sometimes instant service so that also now translates to local government. It is important to be able to multi-task and be patient with the taxpaying public. There is also the ability to work with several "bosses" as elected officials at times will assume they are your supervisor. One also has to not be concerned about being talked to in a stern manner from a taxpayer. It is important for all city government employees to not take things personal. Many times a disgruntled citizen is impatient with the system and not the person.

The BEST government is LOCAL government!