



February 9, 2024

Malik Evans, Mayor
City of Rochester
30 Church Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Dear Mayor Evans:

My fellow Councilmembers join me in writing this letter because we are very concerned about the current reassessment process conducted by the City. For some residents, assessments are projected to more than double.

We understand the City's need to make sure that properties are assessed correctly, and we are happy to see that property values are holding steady or increasing. It is a testament to the hard work that we have all put in over the years. However, we are very concerned about the impact that this increase will have on our most vulnerable residents, particularly our working families and residents over 60 on fixed incomes.

As you are well aware, many of Rochester's older adults are on social security and have lived in their homes for many decades. Any nominal increase in assessment and taxes can have a startling impact on their ability to afford their homes.

Additionally, many residents have expressed concern about the entire assessment challenge process. Many of our residents do not know how to challenge their assessment, especially when they are unable to simply walk into City Hall and express their concerns.

Many of our residents have not recovered fully from the COVID-19 pandemic, meaning an increase of this magnitude will dampen their ability to balance the challenges life thrusts upon them. Thus, we are respectfully requesting that any new assessment be delayed for a period of two years so we can work together to find an amicable solution.

This pause will also allow time for the turbulent real estate market, encumbered by high costs and soaring interest rates, to settle.

Although we appreciate the Council Work Session we had on this matter, it does little to alleviate the growing list of concerns we hear from our residents. We have promised our constituents that their reassessments would be fair, honest and correct – but at this point, we feel it is a promise we are unable to keep.

A delay of the current reassessment will help better prepare our residents for these inevitable changes, and give them time to adjust their finances accordingly.

We look forward to discussing this issue with you at your earliest convenience. Please contact Councilmember Willie J. Lightfoot's office to schedule.

Sincerely,



Willie J Lightfoot, Sr.
At-Large



Stanley Martin
At-Large



Kim Smith
At-Large



Mary Lupien
East District