Answers to questions from the Yakima Herald

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Goals:

1. Put taxpayers first – Treat property owners “like kings,” focusing on customer service and transparency.
2. Create a publicly-available “Data-Depot” that explains valuations, parcel-specific tax coefficients, comparable sales and market data. Display information that's easy to find and understand.
3. Educate the public – Offer webinars, live chat and video explanations so we understand how Yakima County property values are calculated and what it means for our wallets.
4. Put all forms online: a complete file-from-home experience. Today, some important forms are not online and in doing so the assessor's office is breaking Washington State law.
5. Make two online dashboards: one aimed at homeowners and another for real-estate and loan professionals. Ensure each sector gets the service they need in a user-friendly format.
6. In short, my goal is to serve the true needs of our taxpayers in a system that's opaque and frustrating.

Why am I running?

See Goals. I'm a homeowner and businessman, so I get that the property tax system is burdensome. We might as well be nice about it.

How are Property Values Appraised?

You want someone to lower taxes, but I can’t. Our problem is in the budgets for the line-items on our taxes: County, Libraries, Fire & EMS, School Districts, etc - plus levies, levies, levies. Washington State law effectively treats all property owners as Debtors to the Local Budget; together we pay

the full sum. Every taxable property is valued and we "split the check" based on the value of each. The bill always gets paid; it's just a matter of which property owners pay what amount. Property values are discovered using various methods county by county, too. The state does not mandate a certain method be used and there's an entire industry for evaluating properties and their Market Price. Most methods put varying weights on bed/bath counts, square footage, neighborhood market activity (and much more) but they can be wrong because they're predictive. I look forward to stabilizing the swings we've seen in our property values the last four years. That's what the market needs.