

PHONG LA ALAMEDA COUNTY ASSESSOR



The Official Newsletter of the Alameda County Assessor's Office



WHAT DOES THE ASSESSOR'S OFFICE DO?

The Assessor's Office is responsible for locating all taxable property in the County, establishing its taxable value, and applying any legal exemption. With over \$300 billion in assessments, we are one of the largest assessment agencies in the state. We are committed to establishing accurate and fairly assessed property values. We are here to assist you with your questions and concerns. Our goal is to provide you the best customer service.

The Assessor's Office DOES NOT calculate or collect property taxes.

MEET THE ASSESSOR PHONG LA

Phong La was elected on November 6, 2018, to serve as the Assessor for the County of Alameda, and is committed to making government work for the people of Alameda County.

The work that the Assessor's Office does helps generate revenue for Alameda County, its 14 cities, and six unincorporated communities. These major funds provide for crucial services such as schools; public health, social, and family support services; fire, police and sheriff departments; road maintenance; neighborhood improvements, and more.



*Phong La
Alameda County Assessor*

Since taking office, Phong's priorities include increasing customer service and office efficiency. The Assessor's Office is implementing e-Forms, which allow applicants to file forms online from the convenience of their office or home. Phong is also securing resources to address the issue of increased staff workload generated by historic highs in real estate construction and business activities. In addition, the Assessor's Office is working with the Assessment Appeals Board to schedule and hear appeals cases more quickly and ensuring a more timely resolution for taxpayers. Phong has also begun the process of digitizing historic real property records currently maintained only in hard copy. This project will ensure that vital assessment details and property files are protected and available to the staff when valuing both residential and commercial properties off site.



Phong speaking at a real estate class about the Assessor's Office

A CAUSE WORTH DINING FOR!

BY KATHY VAQUILAR AND SHANE NAND

Alameda County's goals for its ACGOV Vision 2026 involves meeting community challenges such as eliminating poverty and hunger. In order to raise public awareness and inspire some friendly competition, 19 departments of Alameda County participated in the annual Stone Soup Food Drive, where County employees team up to incorporate their donations into striking exhibits focusing on ending hunger in Alameda County.

This year the Assessor's Office Stone Soup team decided on the theme, "Give Love to End Hunger." Because they assembled the display in February, the team was drawn toward the connection between love and food. According to Kathy Vaquilar, the team's chair, she stated this about the Assessor's Office's participation and theme, "Love knows no bounds and ... a little bit of love can really make a big difference," which it did for 2019.

The minimum that was asked of the Assessor's Office was for each employee to bring at least two Campbell's Soup cans or to make a donation instead. There were approximately 165 employees in the Assessor's Office at that time and a total of 930 cans of soup and packaged foods was collected. The team arranged these into a big, red, sparkling heart, complete with sequins, flashing lights, garlands, and plenty of red and white soup cans surrounding it. Two generous cardboard arms and hands extended from the giant heart with more food underneath.

When the Stone Soup Food Drive Campaign ended in March, food donations continued to arrive, this time from the public. In April, a panel of judges presented the Assessor's Office with the Most Inspiring Award at the Board of Supervisors' Awards Ceremony.



*The Assessor's Office's 2019 Stone Soup Food Drive display won Alameda County's Most Inspiring Award
Click on image for a short video!*

RIDE A BIKE. SAVE THE WORLD.

BY SHANE NAND



*Suzanne Mah on her morning commute.
Image credit - Jenn Heflin Photography*

The Assessor's Office continues its annual tradition of participating in National Bike Month. This year Bay Area cities along with bicycle coalitions celebrated the 25th anniversary of Bike to Work Day on May 9th.

Assessor's Office Green Commuting Committee member and Bike to Work Day Team Captain Suzanne Mah is using the entire month to encourage people to try alternative forms of commuting, specifically biking or walking.

For Suzanne, it is a great opportunity to set an example which, "plays a small part in promoting green initiatives, our County's [ACGOV] Vision 2026, and even taking alternative forms of transportation." She highlighted that even if it isn't biking, simply taking public transportation or carpooling continues the spirit of National Bike Month.

This year was also a milestone for one Assessor's Office employee - Javier Marquez from the Real Property Appraisal unit, partook in his tenth year. When asked to impart any advice, he responded, "The idea is to show people how easy it is to commute by bike. Try it once or twice, a week, or even a month, and you'll realize that [biking] doesn't take that much longer and you don't end up sweaty and gross."

Cities generally provide Energizer Stations at specific locations where cyclists can take a quick break and get some refreshments, a small snack, and even some words of encouragement. The benefits of biking to work have never changed, along with having a fun time. It helps reduce pollution, traffic congestion, and promote a healthy lifestyle. Not to mention it is the simplest way of combating rising gas prices, now at over \$4 a gallon!



Bike to Work Day participants: Linh Dang, Carlos Toscano, Suzanne Mah, Javier Marquez, and Andrew Greenlees

DATES TO REMEMBER!

2019

January 1st - The assessment of property applies as of 12:01 a.m. on this day each year.
(Effective 1-1-97)

February 15th -

Legal deadline for filing exemption claims for welfare, cemetery, college and exhibitions.

Legal deadline for filing exemption claims for churches.

Legal deadline for filing an exemption claim for homeowners, veterans and disabled veterans.

April 1st - Due date for filing Business Personal Property statements.

April 10th - Last day to pay second installment of property taxes without penalty.

May 7th - Legal deadline for filing business personal property statements without penalty.

July 1st - Assessment roll delivered by Assessor to County Auditor-Controller.

Mid July - Annual mailing of assessment notices to all Alameda County real property owners stating the taxable value of the property.

August 31st - Regular roll unsecured taxes due.

September 15th - Last day to file an Assessment Appeal.

December 10th -

Legal deadline for filing a late exemption claim for homeowners, veterans and disabled veterans.

Last day to pay first installment of property taxes without penalty.



The Mapping Department points to the Office's location