



Harris County Appraisal District News Release

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September 17, 2021

Harris County Appraisal District Wins International Award

Houston — The Harris County Appraisal District (HCAD) won the 2021 Distinguished Assessment Jurisdiction Award presented by the International Association of Assessing Officers (IAAO).

The award was presented at the annual IAAO conference September 1 in recognition of HCAD's creation and development of its remote hearings option in 2020.

HCAD created the remote hearings option at the beginning of the pandemic to allow property owners to have a hearing before the Appraisal Review Board in their own home using a secure, cloud-based video conferencing system. Property owners also were able to come into the HCAD building for an in-person hearing.

HCAD had put a number of health precautions in place at the beginning of the pandemic including separate entrances for the public, vendors, and employees and the Appraisal Review Board members; larger hearing rooms to allow for social distancing; plexiglass shields; and the installation of UV-C lighting in the district's air handling units.

"We are required to offer property owners a hearing if they dispute the value of their property, and yet with the pandemic, we had to practice social distancing to keep everyone healthy," said Roland Altinger, chief appraiser. "This was an option that we created to let property owners have the choice of an in-person or remote hearing."

Altinger explained that the district had discussed remote hearings in the past but it wasn't a pressing issue until the pandemic.

"The response from the public about the remote hearings was so positive that we have continued offering this option," he said.

(more)

The Distinguished Assessment Jurisdiction Award is presented to an assessment jurisdiction that has initiated a technical, procedural or administrative program that is an improvement over prior programs in that jurisdiction. The program and award is generally recognized as a component of a model assessment system and a contributing factor to equity in property taxation.

Altinger presented the award to the board of directors for their continued support in HCAD's initiatives to move the use of technology forward to make it easier for property owners to contact and work with the district.

About HCAD

The Harris County Appraisal District is a political subdivision of the State of Texas established in 1980 for the purpose of discovering and appraising property for ad valorem tax purposes for each taxing unit within the boundaries of the district. The district has approximately 1.8 million parcels of property to assess each year with a total market value of \$691 billion. The appraisal district in Harris County is the largest in Texas, serving approximately 500 taxing units, and one of the largest appraisal districts in the United States. For further information, visit www.hcad.org.

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Roland Altinger, chief appraiser, presents the Distinguished Assessment Jurisdiction Award to Martina Lemond Dixon, an HCAD board member for the continuing support the board of directors provides to the district's use of technology. The International Association of Assessing Officers presented the award to HCAD at its annual conference.