

# Dawson County Assessor's Office

John Phillip Moore, Assessor

Joyce Reil, Deputy

February 10, 2009

TO: Department of Revenue, Property Assessment Division

Ruth A. Sorensen Administrator

SUBJECT: Designation of special value

Dear Ruth:

This letter is in response to your request concerning an explanation of how this county arrives at valuations involving properties that receive special valuation, or greenbelt.

Dawson County has two areas designated for special valuation consideration. Eight properties are in one group abutting a strip of Highway 283 going south out of Lexington to Interstate 80. The boundaries for this corridor end at the section lines of Section 17 Township 9N Range 21W and generally serve as a buffer zone to commercial property in the area. These parcels have received the special value for many years.

Beginning in 2000 a second group of properties received designation as special value parcels. They have these attributes in common:

- They are located within the first section line abutting within one mile of the Platte River;
- They are situated generally south of Interstate 80;
- They most likely include some acres of accretion.

## **Parcels relating to commercial areas**

The eight parcels located along Highway 283 are all agricultural properties abutting commercial development. Agricultural/horticultural valuations are established according to markets in terms of use of similar uninfluenced land sales within the same vicinity and throughout the county. This then is the methodology for determining special valuation of agricultural land uninfluenced by commercial interest. Basically, it is a matter of comparing the agricultural/horticultural use to establish *normal* value in those uninfluenced acres with the market sales within the boundaries established for special value. This property all lies within the same market area and carries the same values per subclass.

For these eight properties, recapture value is established using sales along this highway as though it were a neighborhood unto itself. There has been insufficient enough sales activity for the last three years to enable the county to discover the market/recapture value for commercial properties. This is particularly the case with land values.

## **Recreational, river parcels**

For the agricultural and recreational type properties along the Platte River, considerable uninfluenced agricultural sales information is available from activity well away from this proximity within Dawson County. Those market sales were used as a basis for establishing special values for these particular properties. Irrigated parcels appear to have no influence on the sales along the river, so none of the irrigated acres show a difference between the market (recapture) value and the special value.

Market sales occurring along the river, as well as some documented leasing information, and anecdotal information helped the county to arrive at a market value for the acres influenced by other than agricultural/horticultural uses. There was cursive attention given to the income approach; more data is needed to make a case for both special and actual market values based solely on the income approach.

It has been difficult at best to decipher the sales in terms of the number of acres involved in terms of accretion compared to agricultural and horticultural practices. And as in the past, in many cases surveys have not been conducted or have not been filed. Sales of most of the accretion and mixed production ground along the river from east to west in Dawson County have remained static for several years, with only a handful of sales occurring within a three-year period. Since 1999 when NPPD purchased a huge holding along the eastern border of the county at about \$1,000 an acre, to sales in more recent years exceeding \$3,000 an acre, the market along this corridor has been unpredictable and very hard to pin down.

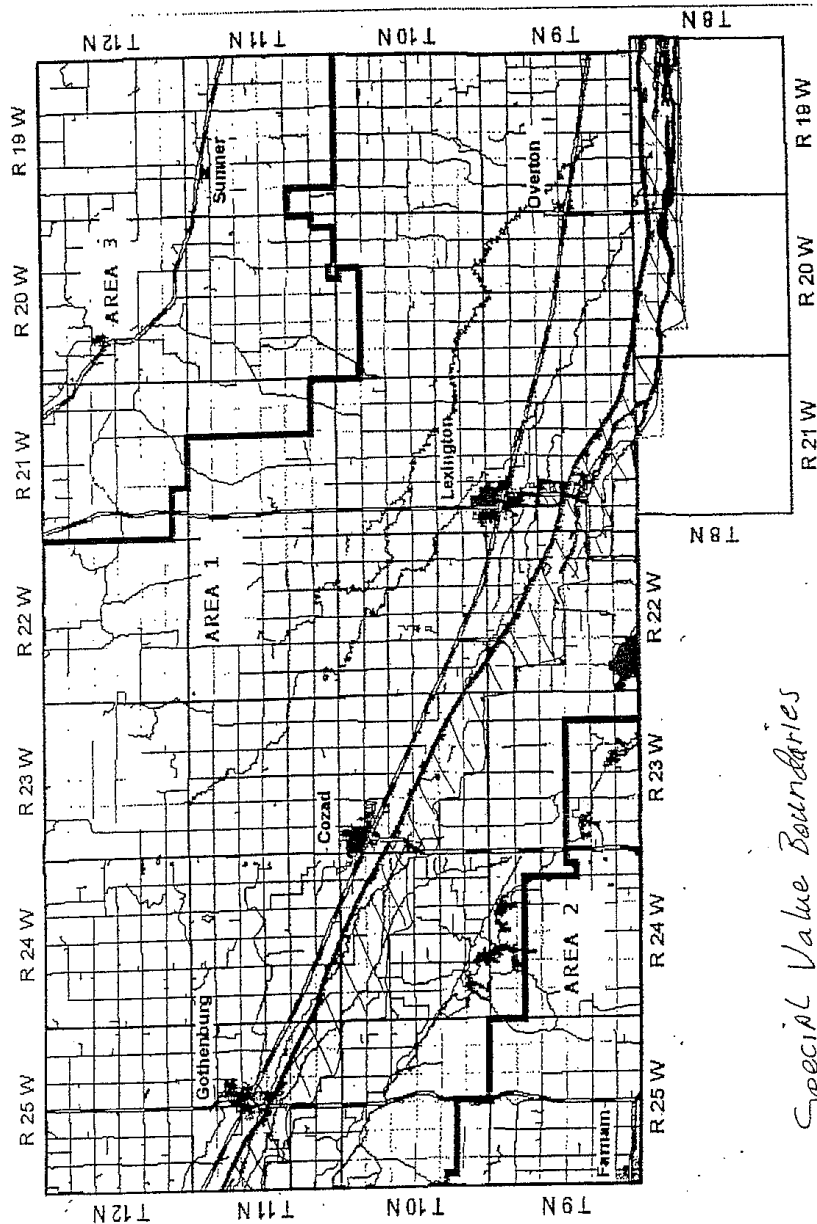
A map indicating the boundaries of the designated greenbelt properties is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

John Phillip Moore  
Dawson County Assessor

Encl.

DAWSON COUNTY - by Market Areas



*Special Value Boundaries*

2/26/2002

MKT AREAS