

2005—2007 Major Accomplishments

The following listing represents only a fraction of the improvements made in the Galveston Tax Office since January 2005 and does not include those items previously mentioned.

- Restructured organization and improved teamwork, communication, training, and pay scales for many team members
- Extended hours at all offices and added a satellite office on Bolivar Peninsula
- Eliminated a six week backlog of motor vehicle registrations and titles and established a 3-5 day turn around
- Established pick-up service for major auto dealers to improve service
- Eliminated backlog of tax payments and reduced payment processing by four (4) months (from June to mid-February)
- Instituted a new quarterly payment reminder program and sent out the first ever February tax payment reminder notices in 2007
- Increased communication with the public through releases of informational articles to the media, presentations to community organizations, and continual website updates
- Improved security and fund accountability and actively seeking improvements through partnerships with the County Auditor's staff
- Converted voter registration system to the State's system fulfilling compliance with the Federal Help American Vote Act (HAVA)
- Acquired and completed conversion to a new property tax software system
- Completed an audit of all tax ceilings
- Completely documenting policies and procedures for all office functions
- Established and provide a Deputy Voter Registrar recruitment and training program
- Provide property tax information seminars
- Actively participated in multiple special and regular Legislative sessions
- Relocated temporary during Courthouse renovation and into permanent offices in September

In addition to overseeing Tax Office operations, Tax Assessor Cheryl E. Johnson serves on the Security and Legislative Committees of the Tax Assessor Collectors Association of Texas (TACA). Galveston hosted the TACA annual convention in Galveston in June.

Where Do We Go From Here?

We are building a team dedicated to serving all of our customers with enthusiasm and excellence. We will continue to strive to improve accountability and quality of services as we seek ways to reduce cost for our taxpayers.

10 Commandments of Customer Service

The philosophy of our team was developed by the Tax Assessor/Collector and is affirmed by all team members at time of employment.

- I. Remember that the customer is never an interruption to our work...the customer IS our work
- II. Brighten every customer's day. Greet everyone with a smile
- III. Whenever possible, call customers by name
- IV. Project professional courtesy and dignity
- V. State things in a positive way
- VI. Never argue with a customer
- VII. Always go the extra mile to provide assistance
- VIII. Never say, "I don't know" without saying, "...but I would be more than happy to find out!"
- IX. Never blame others
- X. Never forget our customers pay our salary

Join our team! Applications for part-time and temporary employment may be delivered directly to our Administrative Support Department. Full-time employment opportunities are listed on-line at the Galveston County website (www.co.galveston.tx.us). *Click on the Human Resources Job Announcement page for additional information.*

The State of the Galveston County Tax Office



Fall 2007



Where the race for quality has no finish line...

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Mission Statement

To provide exemplary service in a cost efficient manner to all customers.

Tax Office Team & Locations

Fifty-one (51) people make up the Galveston County Tax Office (GCTO) team. Four full time offices are open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm in Galveston, League City, Santa Fe, and Texas City. A satellite office is open every Tuesday in Crystal Beach. The recent tax collection services partnership with the City of Friendswood may provide an additional opportunity to expand services to the north end of Galveston County.

Description of Services

- Property and special inventory tax collections
- Motor vehicle registration renewals and titling
- Voter registration
- Beer/wine permit & coin operated machine tax collection

Property Tax Collections

The Galveston Tax Office assesses, collects and disburses property taxes for 35 taxing entities in the County. Services are provided at a base per parcel rate of \$0.32 (or 1% of levy, whichever is less). The per parcel rate was reduced from \$0.45 in 2005 to \$0.38 in 2006 to the current \$0.32 rate.

Seven (7) Property Tax Specialists maintain, update and research property tax records on more than 181,000 parcels of property for over 150,000 property owners. Tax statements are sent throughout the year as ownership, values and exemptions change.

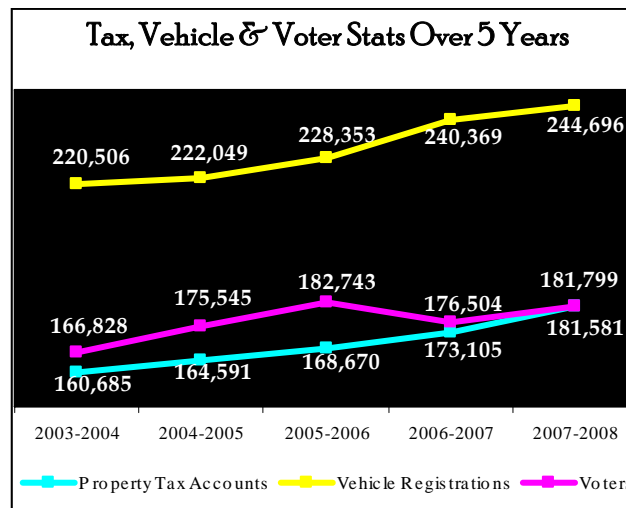
The Operations Department collects and disburses special (vehicle) inventory taxes for 149 dealers for all governments in the County.

Motor Vehicle Registration and Titling

GCTO provides registration and titling services for nearly 245,000 motor vehicles on behalf of the Texas Department of Transportation. That equates to nearly 12,000 transactions by each of our 21 Customer Service Reps each year. In addition, GCTO titled more than 51,000 vehicles in 2006, a number that has remained steady over the last 10 years.

Voter Registration

The Tax Assessor/Collector serves as Voter Registrar for Galveston County. In addition to maintaining records on more than 176,000 voters, our two person Voter Registration Department supports all elections through the provision of poll books and telephone support for election workers.



* Number of registered voters is projected to increase 3% during FY 2007-2008

Beer/Wine & Coin Operated Machines

GCTO collects a wine, beer and alcohol permitting tax on 2,203 businesses. In 2006, we designed a renewal permit sticker for the more than 600 coin operated machines for which we also collect taxes on behalf of Galveston County.

Note: Numbers shown above subject to change. Information is updated at each printing of this document.

Budget and Staffing

The total budget has increased since FY02-03, as a result of cost-of-living adjustments (3.5% in 2006, 5% in 2007 and 4% in 2008) and pay grade increases, establishment of lockbox services, and outsourcing of tax statement production. Staffing was drastically reduced during the 2002-2004 period which resulted in backlogs throughout office operations. Lockbox, statement outsourcing, and creation of a temporary/part-time workforce (employed during peak periods) are resulting in overall cost savings and efficiencies. Budget and staffing figures are shown below, including FY07-08 projections.

	<u>FY02-03</u>	<u>FY03-04</u>	<u>FY04-05</u>
Staffing	65	59	50
Budgets	\$2,235,857	\$2,084,297	\$2,198,863
	<u>FY05-06</u>	<u>FY06-07</u>	<u>FY07-08</u>
Staffing	50	51	51
Budgets	\$2,142,952	\$2,457,100	\$2,551,200

GCTO earns commissions and fees as a result of the services provided to local governments, TXDOT, and the Secretary of State. Additionally, all funds collected earn interest until processed and disbursed. A brief summary of 2006 income and expenses is shown. Our goal is to increase efficiencies and become a profit center for Galveston County in the future.

	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Income</u>
2006 Budget	\$2,457,100	
Revenue Sources		
TXDOT		\$ 1,608,209
Interest		330,000
Entity collection fees		164,000
Chapter 19 (SOS)		33,000
Totals	\$ 2,457,100	\$ 2,135,209