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Shrinking Office Building Values Are Becoming a Dilemma for City Budgets.

Office landlords appeal property-tax assessments, which could lead to reductions in jobs or programs in some jurisdictions

The sharp decline in office building values is likely to become a growing problem for the budgets of cities, schools and other jurisdictions that depend heavily on property taxes from these building owners.

Most municipal budgets haven't suffered much yet. For a variety of reasons, declines in property values typically take years before they are reflected in the real-estate assessments of most taxing jurisdictions.

But municipalities might soon start feeling pain, say lawyers and appraisers throughout the country. Property tax is the largest single expense for most office landlords. Many hope to reduce it to help offset lost revenue from the sluggish return of employees to their desks and the cascading damage it is causing to local businesses catering to these workers. More recently, job cuts in the tech sector are reducing demand for workspace.

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By Peter Grant

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