FAITH COMMUNITIES GO GREEN

HOW TO DETERMINE THE FLOOR AREA OF YOUR BUILDING

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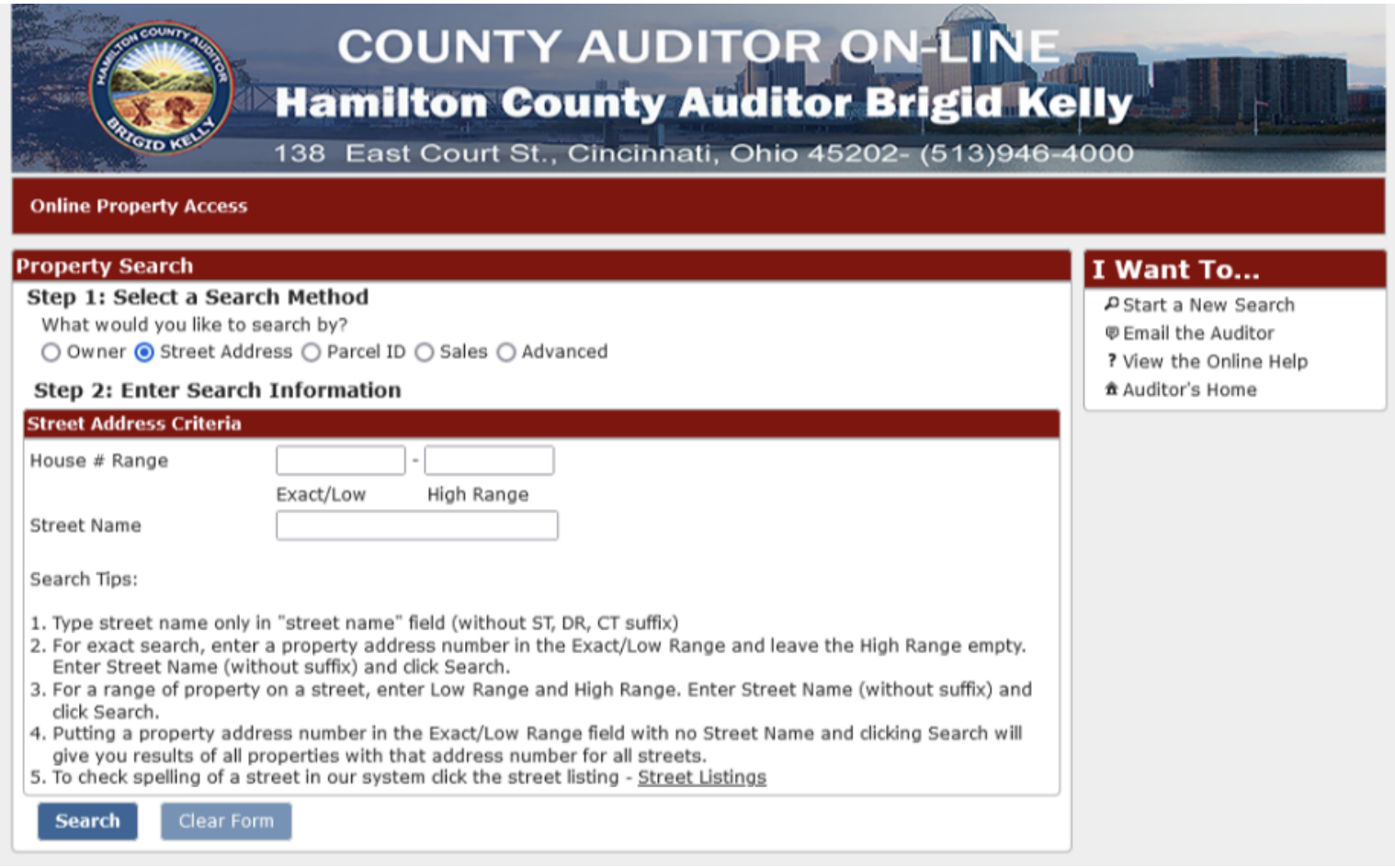
Method 1 –
Probably the easiest and most reliable method is to use the County Auditor's data on square footage from their appraisals.

Go to the Hamilton County (OH) Auditor website: https://wedge1.hcauditor.org/ or the website for your county if you are outside Hamilton County.



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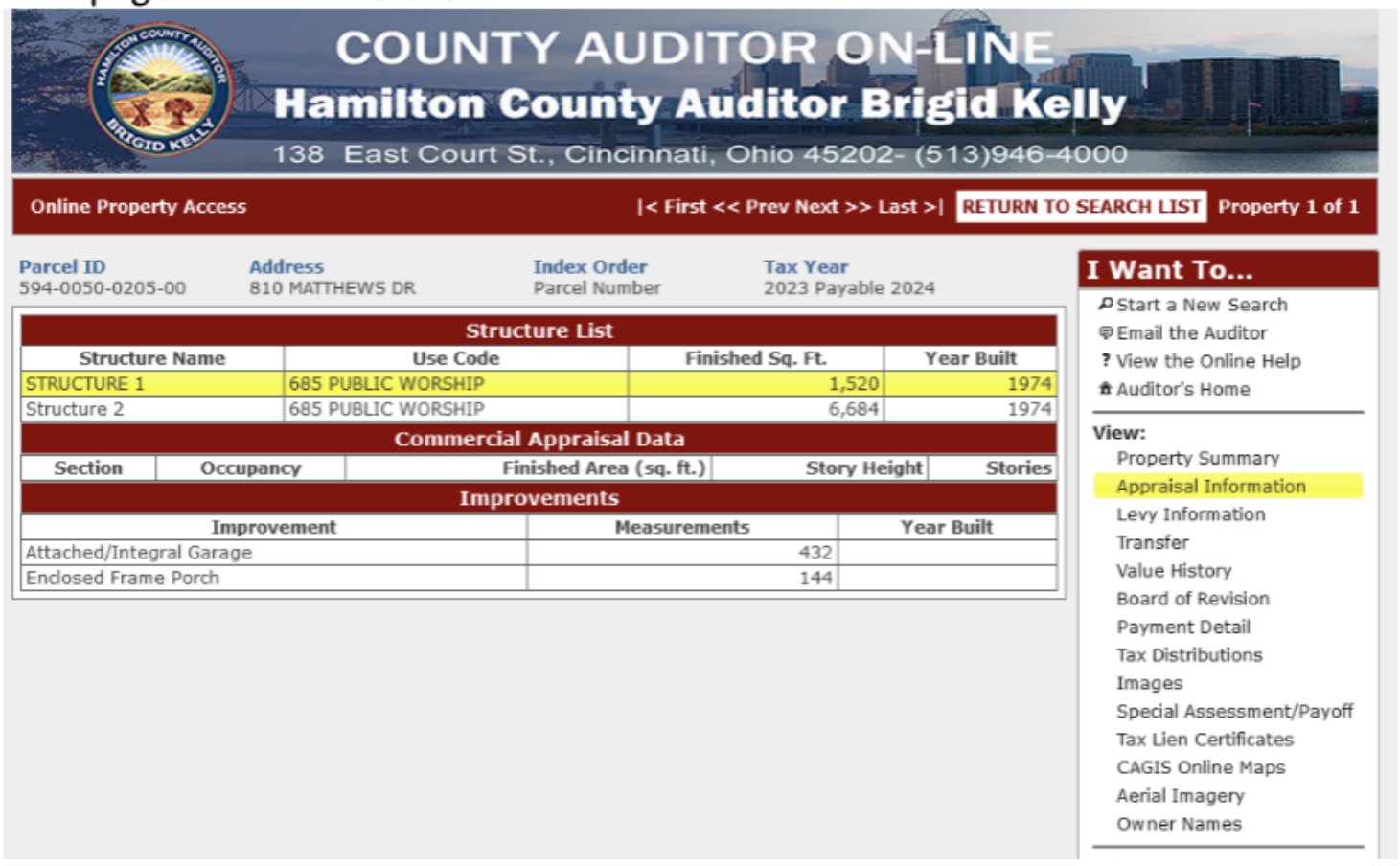
Select your search method: generally street address
Enter exact street number or a range if you are unsure.
Read and follow the “Search Tips”.
Hit “Search” in the lower left corner.

You should see a page that says “Property Summary”.
This will give you lots of information about the characteristics of the property, but not the floor area. From that, go to the right side of the page in the “I want to… Box” and select “Appraisal Information” under “View”.

That page will look like this:



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This example is for my church, St. Simon of Cyrene. Note: All this information is public information, so anyone can access it.

At the top, under “Structure List” you will find the “Finished Sq. Ft” for the building. For some reason they have divided our building into two “structures”, with floor areas of 1,520 and 6,684 sq ft, but the sum of the two, 8204 sq. ft, closely matches our own direct measurements.

If this method fails or doesn’t give you reasonable results, then try Method 2, below.

Method 2 –
Measurements from Google Maps images

Go to “Google Maps”, https://www.google.com/maps

In the “search Google Maps” box, type the address of your building and hit return. You will get a map of the area around your building with a red flag on your building. Hit the “+” button in the lower right corner to blow up the size until the image of your building nearly fills the screen. If you want a more life-like image, hit the “Layers” button in the lower left corner. This should give a satellite overhead view of your building and property.

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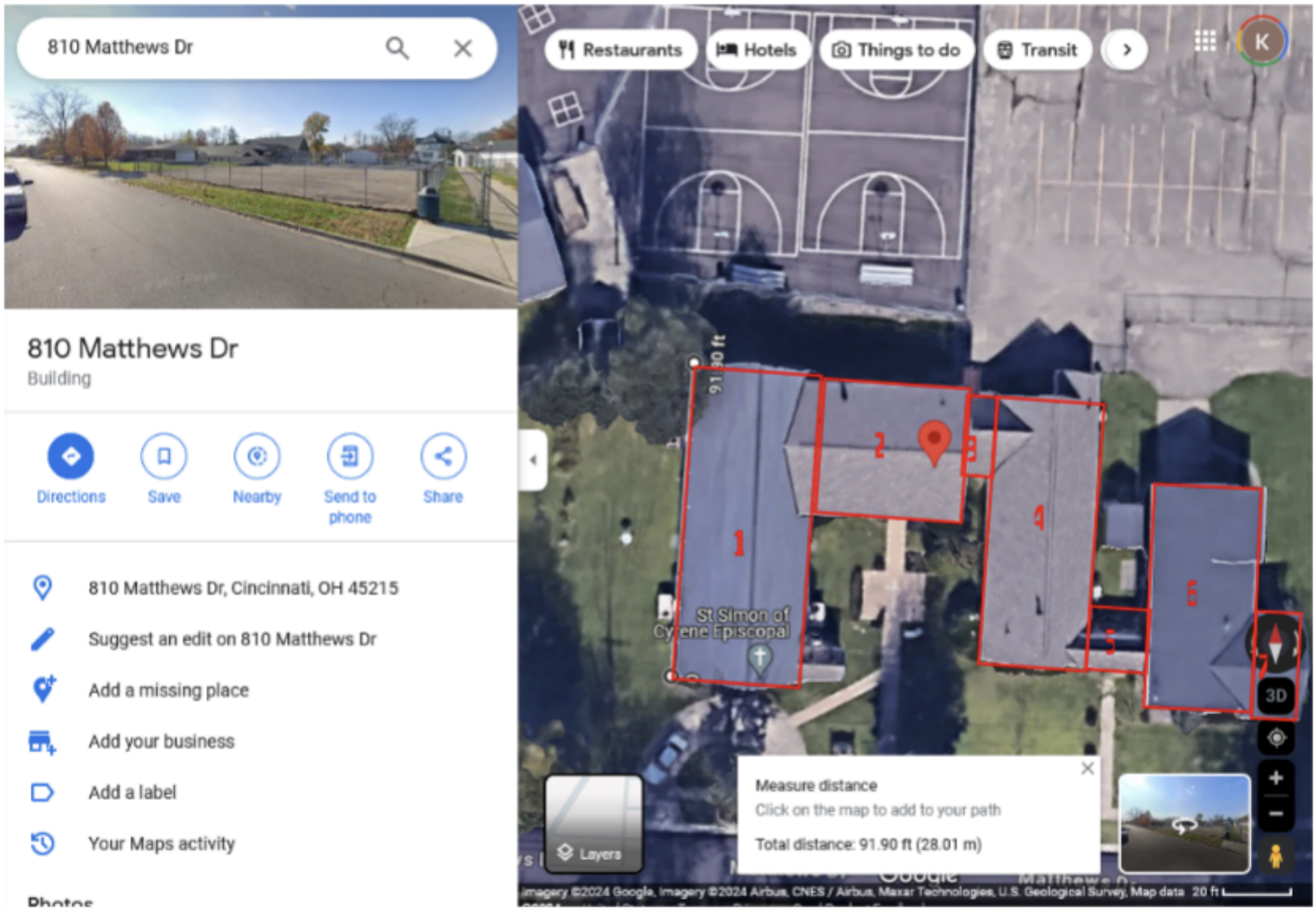

This is the overhead view of St. Simon of Cyrene, 810 Matthews Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45215.

Mentally (or on a sketch) divide your building into a series of adjacent rectangles or subsections. See what I've done in the above figure.

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Place your cursor on a corner of one of the rectangular building subsections and “right-click” your mouse. A dialogue box will open. Select “Measure distance”. Then move the cursor along the subsection edge to another corner of the building image. Again right click with your mouse and select “distance to here”. You will see a ruler appear along that edge with a number at the far end. In this case, I got 90.19 ft as the length of subsection 1 of the building. Once you record that dimension, right click again and select “Clear Measurement” in the dialogue box to get rid of the ruler and number.

Then repeat this process for the width of that subsection of the building, perpendicular to the length. I measured 39.40 ft for our building. Thus the area of this section of the building is 90.19 x 39.40 = 3551 sq ft (rounded off to the nearest sq ft). This part of the structure has only one floor, so that’s the square footage of that part of the building. If there are two (or more) floors in that section, then you need to multiple your measured square footage by the number of floors.

You need to repeat this process for each rectangular subsection of your building, multiplying by the number of floors in each subsection. Once you’ve done all the subsections, then add up all the areas of all the subsections to get the total floor area of the building.

If the building shape is not rectangular then you have to get more creative, using triangular or circular subsections.

You can see that this is a lot more work than going to the County Auditor’s website!