

My house is in the country and I have 7 acres. Why aren't I classed as agricultural?

Iowa legislators have enacted statutes that determine how a property is classed and assessed. Current statutes state that a property is to be classed according to its current and primary use. A property's location or zoning does not determine classification for assessment.

A house on x number of acres with the primary use of the property is to live there, will be classed as residential. This would include properties with an out building, which might have a horse or two, or a couple of cows, or mow a couple acres to sell hay bales. These uses would be incidental to the primary use of the property as a residence.

This would differ from a house on 40 acres with 30 acres of cropland and 200 hogs. Even though the house is their primary residence, the primary use of the overall property is agricultural.

Or,

My building that I use as a repair shop is in a residential area and zoned as residential. Why is it classed as commercial?

A building being used as a business will be classed as commercial, even though it may be in a residential area or zoned residential. Again, it depends on the primary use of the property.

If a property has a building being used as a repair shop business, and there isn't a house, this will be classed as commercial. However, if they discontinue the business and use the property for personal storage or use, then it could be re-classed as residential.

A house would be classed as commercial if used primarily for business purposes, or has 3 or more apartments. However, if someone is using a room or two in the house for a business, i.e. beauty shop, insurance office, etc., and lives the rest of the house, this would be classed as residential.

The only time location and zoning may help determine classification is when there is a vacant lot, which isn't owned by an adjoining or adjacent building owner.