

West Long Branch 2024 Reassessment Report

11/10/2023



[Reassessment FAQ](#)

[Appeal FAQ](#)

[Monmouth County Tax Estimator](#)

Memo from the Assessor

These past four years have been an exceptional period for real estate. Property values continue to increase at a steady pace and prices have not subsided as of the valuation date for the 2024 reassessment (10/1/2023). The Borough is required to reassess all properties annually in order to maintain fair tax distribution. The goal of these annual reassessments is to react to the market sales that have already occurred, not predict what will happen in the future. These recent market changes highlight the importance of the assessment function, which serves as the distribution mechanism of county, school, and municipal tax levies.

The New Jersey constitution requires annual tax levies be distributed based on market value. Property assessments are assigned to distribute taxes, not generate them. In many municipalities throughout the State, they perform a revaluation and distribute their property taxes from that revaluation for some 10 years or longer. By not implementing a proactive assessment maintenance approach, tax distribution becomes less accurate each year that passes, as it assumes that all property values in a municipality appreciate or depreciate at the same rate over time. This assumption is completely inaccurate since property values do not necessarily change in a uniform manner across all property types. The various real estate markets in the Borough of West Long Branch have been prime examples of how different price points and submarkets move at different rates and sometimes, even in different directions.

Changes to the global assessment modeling were made to target market value for the 2024 reassessment. Adjustments were also made to all individual properties, neighborhoods, and submarkets to refine the assessment accuracy. The goal of a reassessment is to annually target 100% market value so that statistical measurements represent better assessment accuracy. For the upcoming 2024 tax year, the overall aggregate value of the Borough of West Long Branch will be approximately 11.39% higher than it was in 2023. This does not mean that property taxes will go up 11.39%, it means that the overall value of properties in the borough has increased. When the valuation of the borough increases, the tax rate decreases, provided the tax levy remains the same. This office anticipates that the 2024 tax rate will be lower than the 2023 tax rate due to the increase in property values (see figure 13).

The 2024 property assessment will be used to calculate the 2024 property tax bill, which won't come out until next summer. In the meantime, property owners should not multiply the 2023 tax rate by the 2024 assessment to determine 2024 property taxes. The link to the Monmouth County Property Tax Estimator on the cover of this report can be utilized to estimate 2024 property taxes. More information concerning the process and results of the reassessment can be found in the body of this report.



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Director's Ratio

The 2023 Director's Ratio for West Long Branch was 100.17%. While the "Director's Ratio" is a complex calculation, this measurement is intended to express the typical relationship between assessments and sale prices in a given municipality. The sampling period used for the Director's Ratio contains sales that took place between January and June. It is then blended with the Director's Ratio from the prior year to stabilize shared levy impacts. With assessments being set during the pre-tax year (based on sales that took place during the prior two-year period), it is expected that ratios will be lower than 100% when markets are appreciating. The opposite would hold true for declining markets. Typically, real estate markets do not appreciate significant amounts year over year, so little emphasis was put on this topic in prior reassessment reports. However, the recent market changes have been exceptional, so the calculation is worth noting in this report to provide context to the declining ratio.

General Coefficient of Deviation (COD)

The General Coefficient of Deviation is widely held as the best indicator in determining proper tax distribution. It is a way to measure how tightly clustered individual assessment ratios are in relation to the average ratio. A lower COD means more accurate and fair tax distribution. The COD normalizes ratios to show accuracy within a municipality regardless of what the Director's Ratio is in any given year.

The more homogeneous the properties in a municipality are, the lower the COD should be. For example, a municipality that is comprised of mostly townhouses would be expected to yield better assessment accuracy than a municipality that is comprised of a complex range of property types. Through annual reassessments, Monmouth and Somerset Counties are showing much lower CODs compared to historical or statewide data.

Despite the complexity of the Borough, the COD for West Long Branch has been more accurate than the norms in the rest of the state, meaning that the assessments and resulting tax distribution are fairer. West Long Branch has also been trending to be meaningfully more accurate than historical coefficients under the reassessment model. Between 2017 and 2020, the COD's for the Borough were stabilizing; however due to the volatility in the market these past few years we have seen the COD's begin to trend higher. Coefficients will inevitably be higher during years that the underlying market is more volatile or suffers from lack of supply or demand.

Year	General Coefficient of Deviation
2013	7.93
2014	13.31
2015	11.34
2016	11.60
2017	8.80
2018	9.90
2019	9.17
2020	9.27
2021	10.94
2022	13.98
2023	12.12

(figure 1)

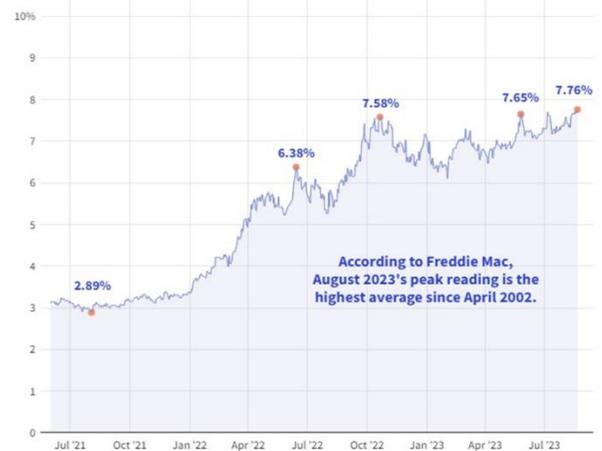
Real Estate Market Observation

We have seen incredible price appreciation and volatility throughout the entire market. While the uptick in interest rates that began in the late summer of 2022 was expected to begin to cool sale prices, the continued lack of inventory has only fueled the competition for homes on the market. Homes listed for sale are still quickly receiving multiple offers and at prices that exceed the asking price. Over the past couple of years, the Federal Reserve has steadily increased hiked interest rates in order to counter the rise in inflation. As a result, we have seen 30-year mortgage interest rates that were below 3% only a couple of years ago climb to over 8% recently. As of the date of this report, 30-year mortgages are close to a 23-year high. Much of the low inventory in the residential market can be attributed to homeowners with these low-interest rate mortgages opting to stay in their current home rather than sell.



30-Year Fixed-Rate Mortgage Average - June 2021 to Aug. 22, 2023

For new purchase loans with an 80% LTV, a 700-760 FICO score, and no discount points



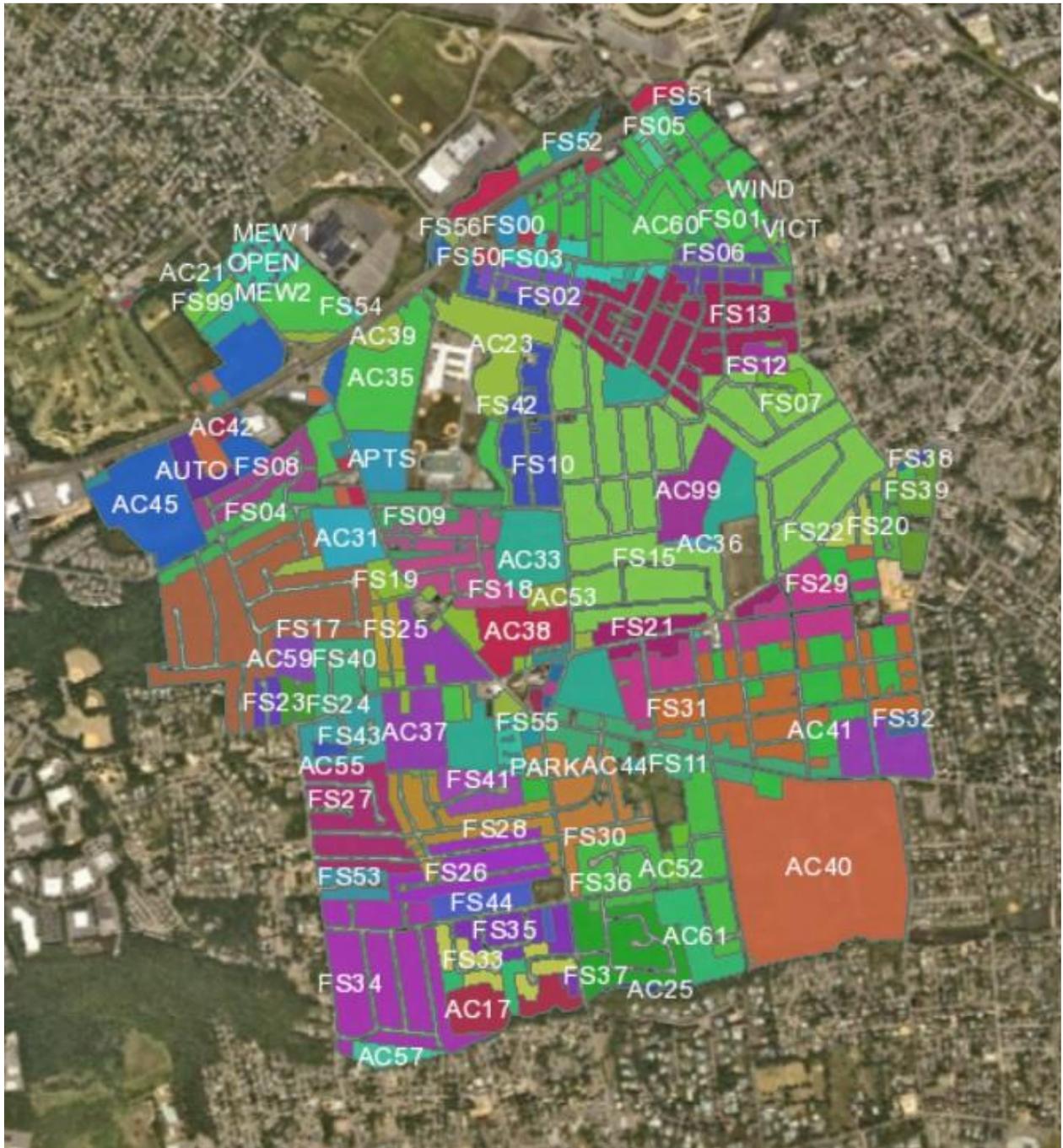
Source: Investopedia daily mortgage rate data

Investopedia

(figure 2)

The most recent reassessment takes these market changes into account when setting the 2024 assessments. Sales from 2022 and 2023 were used in the reassessment modeling, giving greater weight to the more recent sales. The 2024 preliminary value of West Long Branch has increased by 11.39%. This 11.39% can be seen as the baseline for apportionment change. Any property that has increased greater than 11.39% will pay a higher proportionate share of the tax levy. Conversely, any property increasing less than 11.39% (or decreasing) will pay a lesser proportionate share of the tax levy.

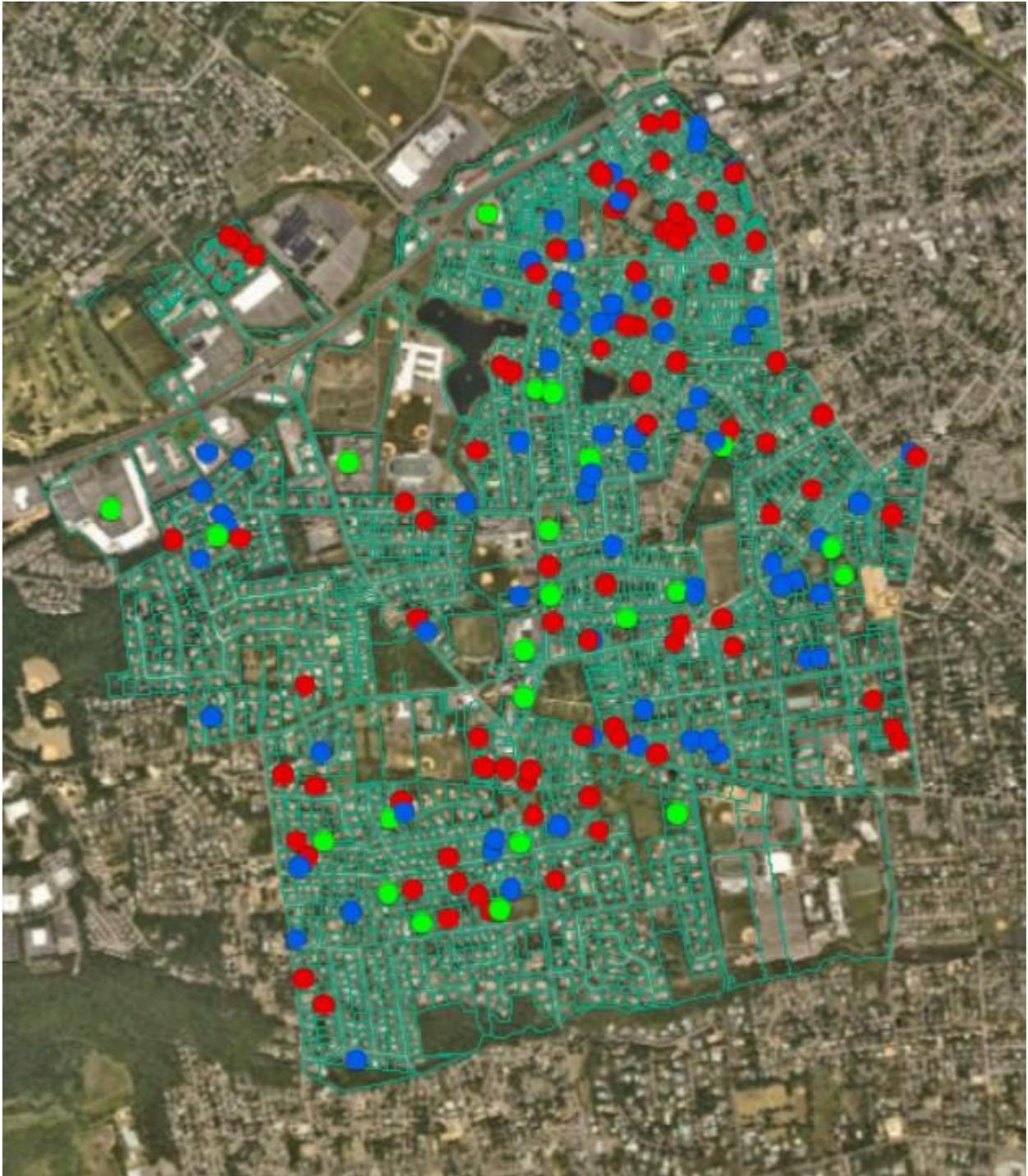
VCS Neighborhood Stratification Mapping



(figure 3)

VCS, or Value Control Sectors, help differentiate local markets and neighborhoods from one another. Properties throughout the borough all have different influences that affect property values. Through the 2024 reassessment, changes to global modeling were made to target market value. Adjustments were also made to all individual properties, neighborhoods, and submarkets to refine assessment accuracy. The goal is to annually target 100% market value so that the statistical measurements represent better assessment accuracy. The primary driver of a reassessment is recent “arms-length transactions”. Statutorily, properties are assessed for what they would have sold for on October 1st of the pretax year. The 2024 valuation date is October 1, 2023. There were 170 “usable” sales in the 2022-2023 market analysis.

2022-2023 Sales Mapping



(figure 4)

Colored dot correlates with sales ratio: Red >105%, Blue 95%-105%, Green <95%

While the local market has appreciated at significant rates, assessors must view sales data used in the study in its totality when employing mass modeling techniques. While more recent sales are certainly given more credibility in the analysis, older sales will still be a stabilizing factor with annual reassessments. Inevitably, older sales will pull the modeling in the direction that the market was in the past. When there is significant appreciation or depreciation from one year to the next, the older sales will be more impactful on ratio and COD metrics. The aggregate value for the Borough of West Long Branch has increased by approximately 11.39% from 2023.

The below chart illustrates the percentage change for Borough properties.

Assessment Change Review

PRC Ratio for Municipality: West Long Branch Boro	Property Class: VACANT LAND, RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY (1 - 4 FAMILY), FARM (HOUSE), FARM (QUALIFIED), COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL, APARTMENT	Judgments Removed
VCS : ALL	Style : ALL	Neighborhood : ALL
Added Assessments : Removed	0 IMP Last year & PRC IMP > 1: Removed	

Change Bucket	# Properties	% Change
A. Decrease: 15% and Over	17	0.69%
B. Decrease: 10-15%	7	0.29%
C. Decrease 5-10%	93	3.80%
D. Decrease: 2-5%	108	4.41%
E. Decrease: 0-2%	75	3.06%
F. No Change	3	0.12%
G. Increase 0-2%	169	6.90%
H. Increase: 2-5%	276	11.27%
I. Increase: 5-10%	647	26.43%
J. Increase: 10-15%	496	20.26%
K. Increase 15%+	557	22.75%
#DIV/0!	0	0.00%
Grand Total	2448	100.00%

(figure 5)

Property Inspections (data collection)

The NJ Division of Taxation requires any municipality that is performing annual reassessments to have an approved inspection cycle. The inspection cycle for the Borough is 5 years, meaning that your property will be inspected once every 5 years. The purpose of these inspections is to gather pertinent information on each property so that the appraisal process is fair and uniform. The inspectors are not appraisers and are not appraising your home during these inspections. The inspectors are simply collecting data, which is then returned to this office where the reassessment process is completed. The Borough completed the first five-year (2014 – 2018) inspection cycle in 2018. The second cycle (2019 – 2023) is coming to an end and the borough will need to post an RFP for inspections services for our next inspection cycle which begins in 2024.

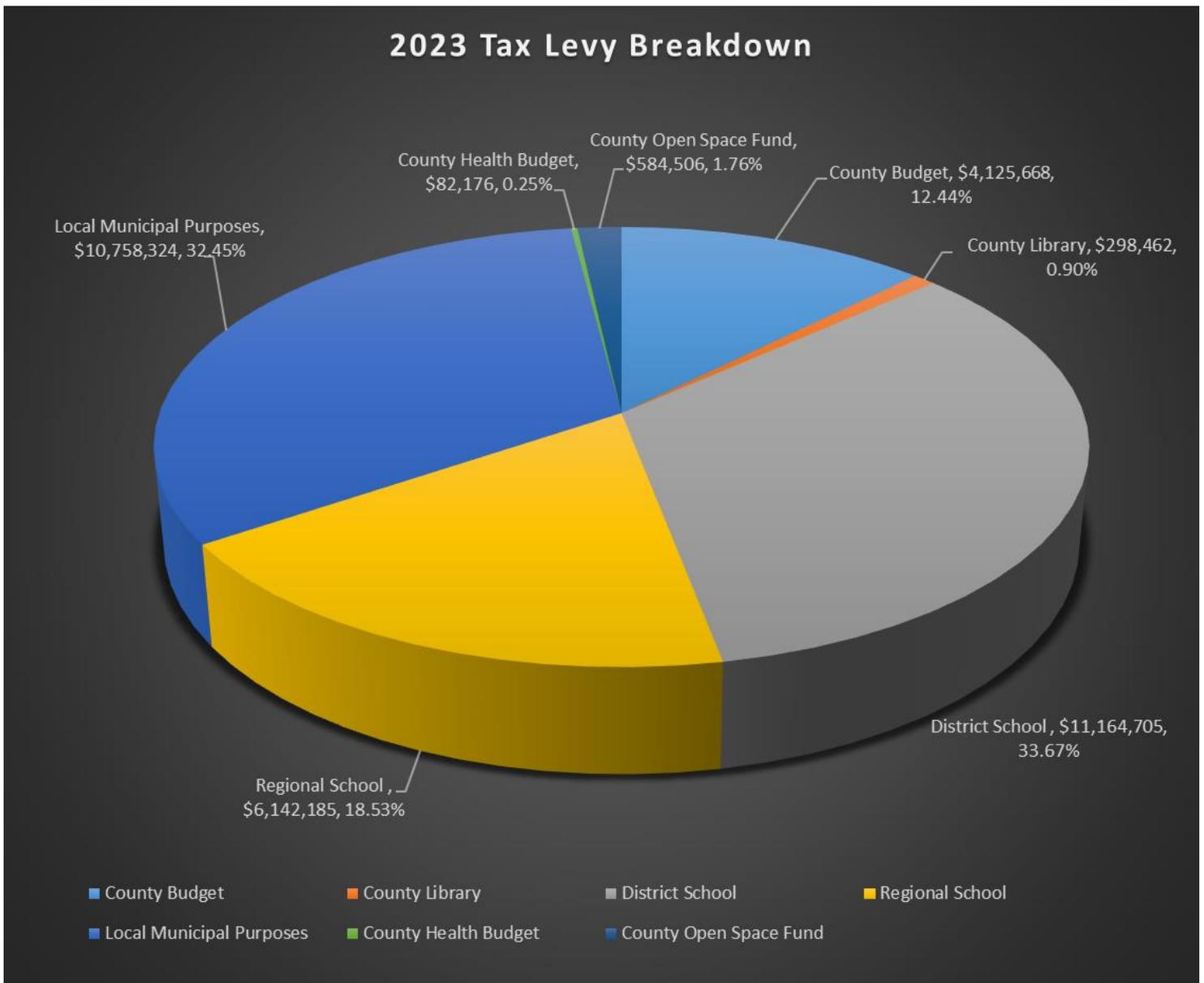
	Borough of West Long Branch Inspection Schedule	
	<u>Year</u>	<u>Properties Completed</u>
First Inspection Cycle 2014 - 2018	2014	20%
	2015	20%
	2016	20%
	2017	20%
	2018	20%
Second Inspection Cycle 2019 - 2023	2019	20%
	2020	20%
	2021	20%
	2022	20%
	2023	20%
Third Inspection Cycle 2024 - 2028	2024 (RFP)	TBD

(figure 6)

West Long Branch Tax Levy History

Tax Levy Component	2019 Tax Levy	2020 Tax Levy	2021 Tax Levy	2022 Tax Levy	2023 Tax Levy	Percent of Bill
County Budget	\$ 3,288,787	\$ 3,493,634	\$ 3,480,726	\$ 3,660,193	\$ 4,125,668	12.44%
County Library	\$ 235,265	\$ 254,275	\$ 261,265	\$ 275,085	\$ 298,462	0.90%
District School	\$ 10,220,476	\$ 10,428,371	\$ 10,593,669	\$ 10,855,503	\$ 11,164,705	33.67%
Regional School	\$ 4,600,721	\$ 4,817,677	\$ 5,285,848	\$ 5,672,409	\$ 6,142,185	18.53%
Local Municipal Purposes	\$ 9,214,239	\$ 9,469,925	\$ 10,092,882	\$ 10,499,164	\$ 10,758,324	32.45%
County Health Budget	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 82,176	0.25%
County Open Space Fund	\$ 379,595	\$ 407,909	\$ 418,601	\$ 474,249	\$ 584,506	1.76%
Total Tax Levy	\$ 27,939,083	\$ 28,871,791	\$ 30,132,991	\$ 31,436,603	\$ 33,156,026	

(figure 7)



(figure 8)

Total Change of Net Valuation Taxable

The net valuation of the Borough is increasing by 11.39% in 2024 (see figure 9). About 270.4M has been added to the West Long Branch ratable base (partially related to new construction and mostly related to market appreciation).

2022 Final Net Valuation	2,373,679,923
2023 Preliminary Net Valuation	2,644,034,578
Change	270,354,655
Change %	11.39%

(figure 9)

Property Class Breakdown (Year over Year)

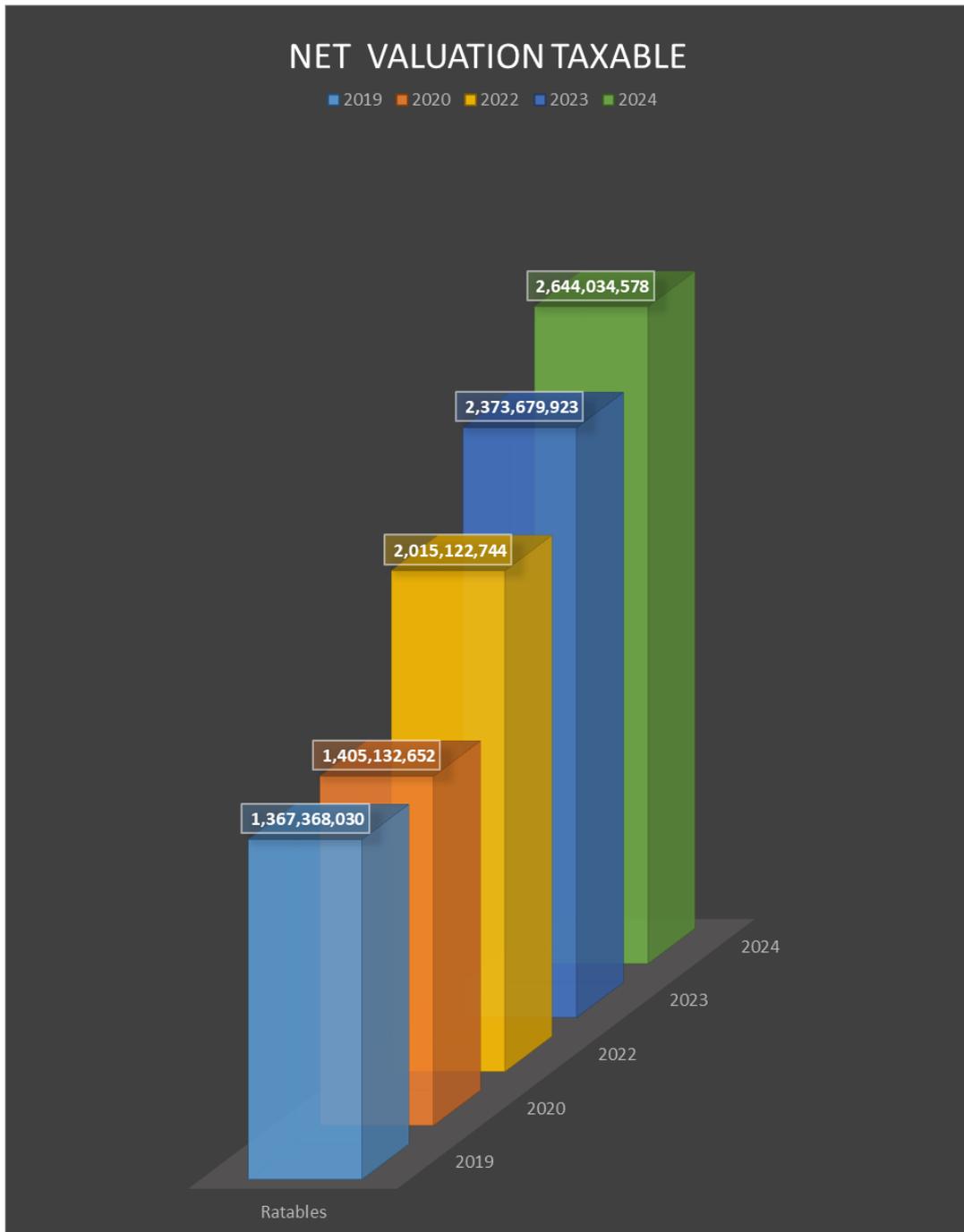
2023 Final Tax List					
Class	Property Type	Count	Value	Average	Share of Borough
1	Vacant Land	95	25,673,600	270,248	1.08%
2	Residential	2,300	2,004,312,600	871,440	84.44%
3A	Farm House	2	1,768,900	884,450	0.07%
3B	Qualified Farmland	4	8,900	2,225	0.00%
4A	Commercial	165	268,104,600	1,624,876	11.29%
4B	Industrial	2	3,845,800	1,922,900	0.16%
4C	Apartment	3	65,930,100	21,976,700	2.78%

Total	2,369,644,500
Verizon	4,035,423
Net Valuation Taxable	2,373,679,923

2024 Preliminary Tax List					
Class	Property Type	Count	Value	Average	Share of Borough
1	Vacant Land	93	30,491,900	327,870	1.15%
2	Residential	2,306	2,250,817,400	976,070	85.13%
3A	Farm House	1	620,200	620,200	0.02%
3B	Qualified Farmland	2	6,800	3,400	0.00%
4A	Commercial	165	286,282,800	1,735,047	10.83%
4B	Industrial	2	3,989,300	1,994,650	0.15%
4C	Apartment	3	66,898,200	22,299,400	2.53%

Total	2,639,106,600
Verizon	4,927,978
Net Valuation Taxable	2,644,034,578

(figure 10)



(figure 11)

2019 - 2024 Tax Levy and Net Taxable Value		
Year	Ratables	Tax Rate
2019	1,367,368,030	2.043%
2020	1,405,132,652	2.055%
2021	1,559,058,391	1.933%
2022	2,015,122,744	1.560%
2023	2,373,679,923	1.397%
2024	2,644,034,578	TBD
	270,354,655	Ratable base change 2023 to 2024 (Prior to Appeals)
	11.39%	Increase Prior to Appeals

(figure 12)

2024 Tax Rate Estimate

Year	Ratables	Tax Levy	Tax Rate	
2023	2,373,679,923	33,156,026	1.397%	
2024*	2,644,034,578	33,156,026	1.254%	*Rate if levy was the same year over year and no reductions from appeals
2024**	2,617,594,232	33,819,147	1.292%	**Assumes a 1% reduction in ratables from appeals & 2% increase in the levy.
Realistic 2024 Tax Rate Range 1.250%-1.290%				

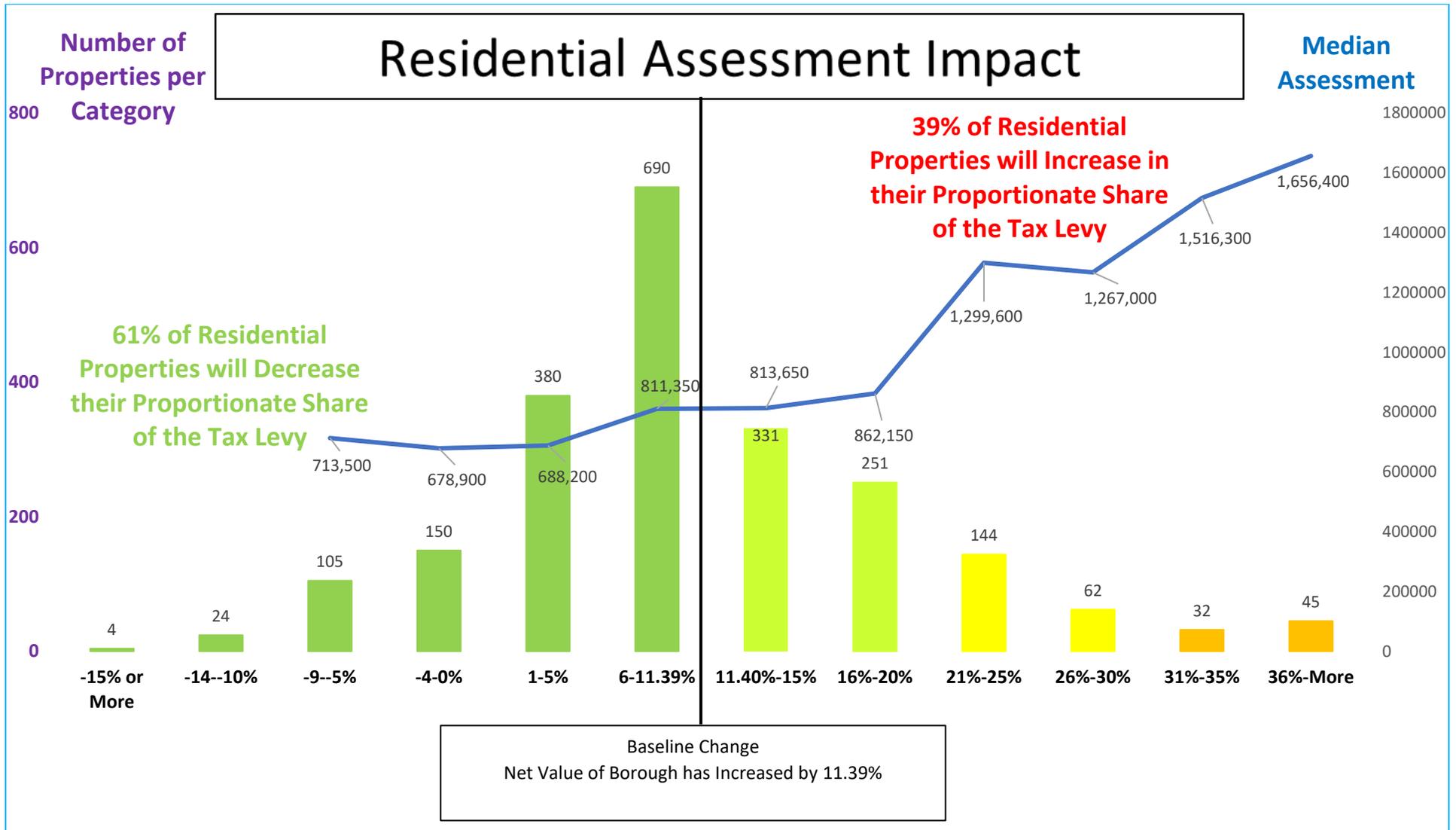
(figure 13)

Assessment change of all residential properties (Excluding new construction and properties that had renovations)

	Residential Classified Properties			
	Assessment Change Category	Number of Properties in Change Category	% of Total	Median Assessment of Group
61% of Residential Properties will Decrease their Proportionate Share of the Tax Levy	-15% or More	4	0.18%	
	-14--10%	24	1.08%	
	-9--5%	105	4.73%	713,500
	-4-0%	150	6.76%	678,900
	1-5%	380	17.13%	688,200
	6-11.39%	690	31.11%	811,350
39% of Residential Properties will Increase in their Proportionate Share of the Tax Levy	11.40%-15%	331	14.92%	813,650
	16%-20%	251	11.32%	862,150
	21%-25%	144	6.49%	1,299,600
	26%-30%	62	2.80%	1,267,000
	31%-35%	32	1.44%	1,516,300
	36%-More	45	2.03%	1,656,400
	Total Properties in Group	2218	100.00%	

*Net Value of Borough has Increased 11.39%

(figure 14)



(figure 15)



(figure 16)

Tax Board Assessment Data Analysis Module (ADAM360) Standardized Review:
All 2022/2023 residential usable sales
 (removing top & bottom 2.5% outliers and properties that had renovations after the sale)

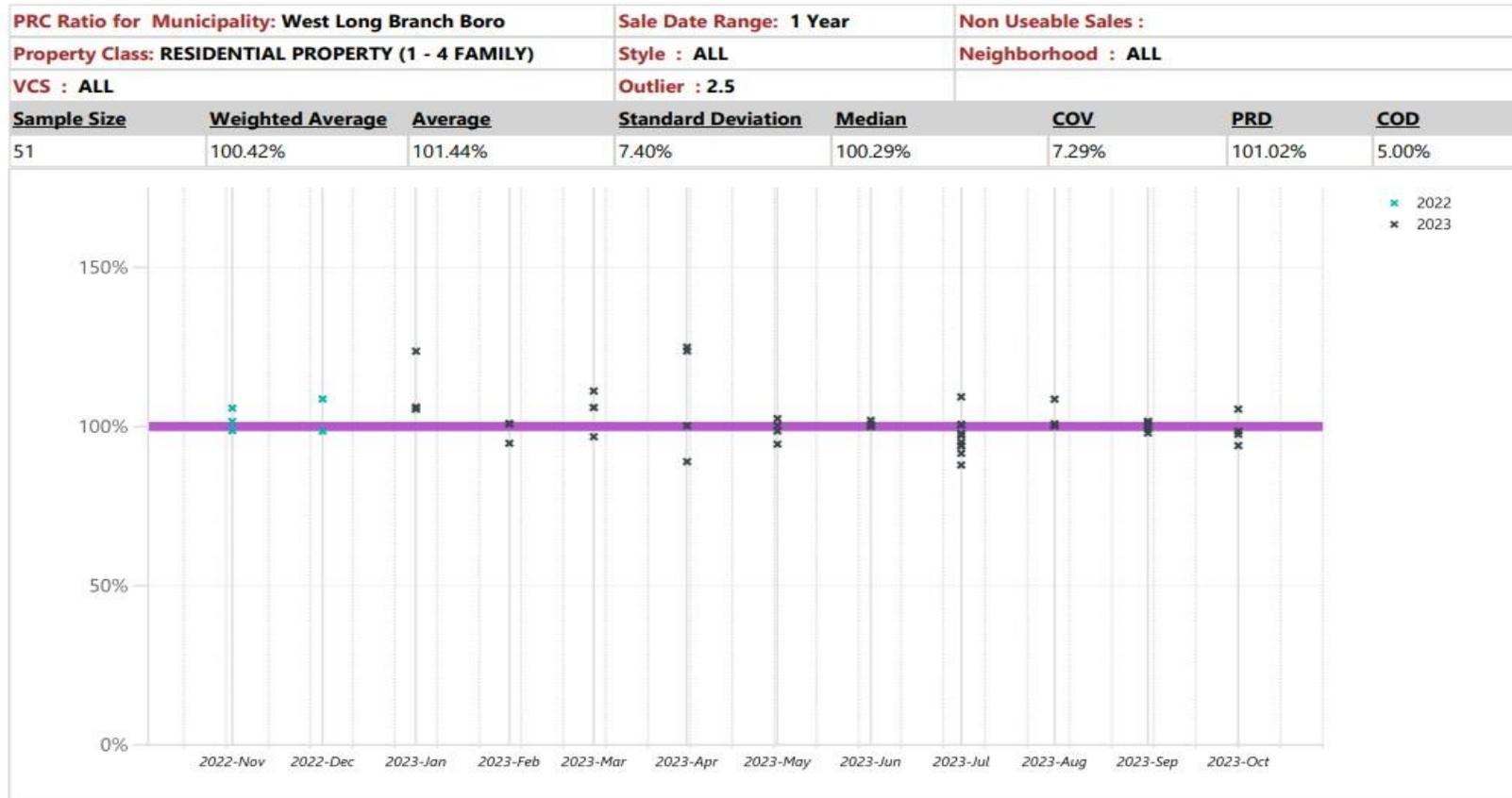
PRC Ratio Scatter



(figure 17)

Tax Board Assessment Data Analysis Module (ADAM360) Standardized Review:
All residential usable sales during the past 1-year period
(removing top & bottom 2.5% outliers and properties that had renovations after the sale)

PRC Ratio Scatter



(figure 18)

Tax Board Assessment Data Analysis Module (ADAM360) Standardized Review:

All residential usable sales during the past 6-month period
 (removing top & bottom 2.5% outliers and properties that had renovations after the sale)

PRC Ratio Scatter



(figure 19)