

STATE OF INDIANA

DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE



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Ratio Study Narrative 2024

| General Information | |
|---------------------|---------|
| County Name | ELKHART |

| Person Performing Ratio Study | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Name | Phone Number | Email | Vendor Name (if applicable) |
| JAMES E. ALLEN | (574)535-6594 | JALLEN@ELKHARTCOUNTY.COM | |
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| Sales Window | 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023 |
|---|--|
| If more than one year of sales were used, was a time adjustment applied? | If no, please explain why not. |
| | |
| | If yes, please explain the method used to calculate the adjustment. |
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Groupings

Please provide a list of townships and/or major class groupings (if any). Additionally, please provide information detailing how the townships and/or major classes are similar in market.

****Please note that groupings made for the sole purpose of combining due to a lack of sales with no similarities will not be accepted by the Department****

Industrial Vacant

Insufficient valid sales data to analyze

Industrial Improved

This section was analyzed as a single group. As a heavily industrialized county, there is similar access to supplies, shipping routes and staffing throughout the county. As such, you can find similar properties across the townships. This is similar to groupings from prior years.

Commercial Vacant

Insufficient valid sales data to analyze

Commercial Improved

This section was analyzed as a single group. This was done due to the varying uses, sizes and styles of this type of property. With the industrialized nature of many jobs within the county, people have a tendency to travel within the county quite often. This has led to many similar commercial enterprises operating throughout the different townships. This is similar to groupings from prior years.

Residential Vacant

This section was analyzed as a single group. This was done based on the strong seller's market created by limited available inventory. As there are similar neighborhoods located within almost every township of the county, lack of viable purchase or construction options has caused buyers to look in other areas of the county for similar purchase options. This is similar to groupings from prior years.

Residential Improved

There were sufficient sales so that all townships were analyzed on their own

Cyclical Reassessment

Please explain which townships were reviewed as part of the current phase of the cyclical reassessment.

BENTON—INDUSTRIAL/UTILITY

CLINTON—INDUSTRIAL/UTILITY

ELKHART—ALL CLASSES

JACKSON—ALL CLASSES

JEFFERSON—ALL CLASSES

LOCKE—RESIDENTIAL; AG

OLIVE—INDUSTRIAL/UTILITY

Land Order

Was the land order completed for the current cyclical reassessment phase? If not, please explain when the land order is planned to be completed.

Yes, the land order was updated for neighborhoods in which sufficient vacant sales could be identified for analysis. The land order was also updated in regards to standard sizing for neighborhoods included as part of the current reassessment cycle. The land order changes were then presented to the county PTABOA and approved on 12/5/23. Land order changes are noted in the supplemental file included with this submission to the DLGF.

Comments

In this space, please provide any additional information you would like to provide the Department in order to help facilitate the approval of the ratio study. Such items could be standard operating procedures for certain assessment practices (e.g. effective age changes), a timeline of changes made by the assessor's office, or any other information deemed pertinent.

Our sales review process begins when we receive a copy of the filed sales disclosure form. Our team then proceeds to verify the sales data in accordance with the DLGF's guidance for what is or is not considered a valid sale. This process involves the review of the sales disclosure form data, contacting those involved in the sale, aerial GIS review, field visits, MLS review, Costar review, and review of any other notes and data that can be found to make sure that the assessment data is as accurate as possible. Any parcel marked as having a condition change has been compared to other parcels within that neighborhood. We also review unsold properties to verify if condition changes are warranted. Many items are added per MLS review at the time of sale. We typically do not enter dwellings so interior information is updated through the use of questionnaires, discussions with owners, and MLS. We also use online services to conduct reviews on the accuracy of parcel data for properties that are typically listed but yet to have a finalized transfer requiring the filing of a sales disclosure form.

PSC's 309, 409, & 509 should be considered with their respective vacant categories when determining the year to year AV increases/decreases as these codes each state "parcel classified as Vacant" per DLGF definitions.

Our work permit process involves four outside offices. The cities of Elkhart, Goshen, and Nappanee handle the processing and approval of their own work permit applications. The County office handles all other areas within the county. We receive copies of permits for all trades (electrical, plumbing, mechanical, etc.). Once a permit is received by our office, the information is entered into our Cama database so that we can track the progress of the work on the permit. We do verify with the four offices to guarantee that we are getting all of the permits that are issued. We receive both construction permits and demolition permits. We have specific employees that are responsible for verifying permit work within their assigned townships. It is broken down this way so that the employees can become familiar with the properties in their assigned townships and can more easily identify if something is changed on a property without a permit. If changes appear to have been made to a property for which we do not have a permit, that parcel is also reviewed and appropriate changes are made to make sure the assessment is accurate and up to date. The employee will conduct a site visit to verify the progress of the work specified by the permit and will sometimes visit the same property multiple times until the work is either completed or the permit is retired. If the permit is for changes to the inside of a structure, the employee will speak with the owner (sometimes calling before the visit to set up an appointment) to determine the progress of the work as well as the type of construction when necessary. They do not enter structures unless they are invited in by the owner to inspect the progress. If the employee conducting the site visit is not able to speak with the owner about interior permit information, they will leave a business card with a request for the owner to contact the office. If a response is not received by the office, the employee will continue to make site visits to the property in an attempt to speak with the owner. In the event that an employee has been to the same property multiple times with no response from the owner, we have also contacted the inspector or contractor listed for the work permit to get descriptions and information from them. It is also important to point out that when an employee goes out to verify information on a work permit, they are also attempting to verify all information for that properties assessment and not just the item listed on the permit.

We utilize a standard effective age calculation similar to the new construction breakdown for properties that have been remodeled and we are able to determine the year in which the work was completed. All employees use the same calculations in an Excel spreadsheet to calculate effective age. This is done for all of our processes from permit work, sales review, listing review, appeals, reassessment, etc. and applied uniformly.