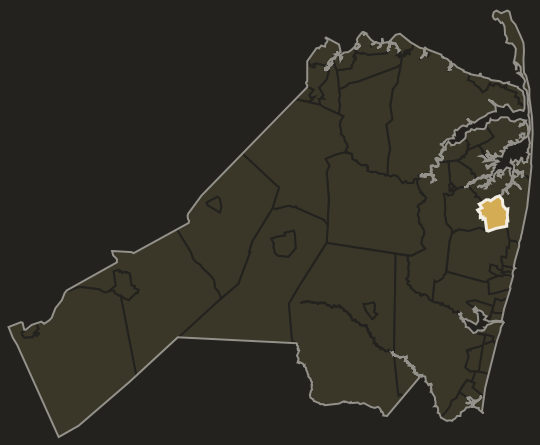
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AN IN DEPTH TOWN GUIDE

Living in West Long Branch, NJ

A short history, the sections of town, homes and taxes, where to shop and eat, things to do, and a moving checklist for your new home.



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INSIDE THIS GUIDE

Living in West Long Branch

1	At a glance	The basics
2	A short history	How the town came to be
3	Sections of town	Streets around the campus and the lake
4	Homes and taxes	What you will find and what it costs to own
5	Groceries, dining and shopping	Where locals shop and eat
6	Getting around	Roads and commuting
7	Things to do	Parks, places and local events
8	Moving checklist	Setting up your new home
9	Questions people ask	Short, direct answers
10	Worksheets	To fill in on your visits

This guide goes deeper than our website: the history, the sections of town, a moving checklist and worksheets for your visits. Keep it, mark it up, and call either of us with questions.

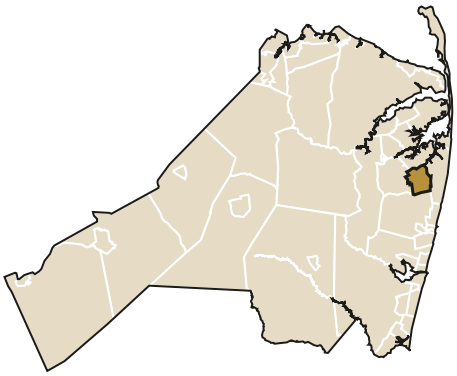
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1

AT A GLANCE

West Long Branch at a glance

County	Monmouth
Population	About 8,600 (2020 census)
Size	About 2.9 square miles
Setting	Residential streets around a university campus, a few miles from the ocean
Main roads	Route 36, Route 71 (Monmouth Road and Cedar Avenue) and County Route 547 (Broadway)



West Long Branch in gold, in Monmouth County

2

A SHORT HISTORY

The story of West Long Branch

The Lenape lived in this part of the shore before European settlement, and for generations the area was farmland. From the 1700s through the Civil War the small village here was known as Mechanicsville, and in the 1870s as Branchburg. By the late 1800s it was a section of Eatontown, and wealthy summer residents of Long Branch were building large estates on its quiet inland roads.

Residents felt they paid more in taxes than they got back from Eatontown and voted to separate, and West Long Branch was incorporated as a borough in 1908. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson used the Shadow Lawn estate as his summer White House. The rebuilt Great Hall at Shadow Lawn became the center of Monmouth University's campus in 1956, and much of the rest of the borough grew into quiet residential streets.

KEY DATES

Timeline

1903	Murry Guggenheim builds his Beaux Arts summer house, now part of Monmouth University's library.
1908	West Long Branch is incorporated as a borough, separating from Eatontown.
1916	President Woodrow Wilson uses Shadow Lawn as his summer White House.
1956	Monmouth University acquires Shadow Lawn, which becomes the heart of its campus.

3

SECTIONS OF TOWN

Streets around the campus and the lake

Around Monmouth University. Streets near Cedar Avenue and Norwood Avenue, close to the campus, the Great Hall at Shadow Lawn and the old estate grounds, with a mix of older and newer single family homes.

Near Franklin Lake. Residential streets around Franklin Lake and its park, mostly single family homes on established lots.

Norwood Park. An older place name for a section partly within the borough, mostly single family homes.

Along Monmouth Road and Broadway. The streets around borough hall on Broadway and along Monmouth Road (Route 71), near the Route 36 corridor, with homes, small businesses and the borough's community buildings.

> West Long Branch was once a section of Eatontown, known as Mechanicsville and later Branchburg. It voted to become its own borough in 1908.

4

HOMES AND TAXES

What you will find

Single family homes: On residential streets across the borough, built over many decades.

Homes near the campus: Streets close to Monmouth University and its historic buildings.

Homes near the main roads: Streets close to the Route 36 and Route 71 corridors.

Worth knowing: Location within the borough matters. A street near the Monmouth University campus or close to Route 36 is a different setting from one near Franklin Lake. If you plan to rent a home out, check the borough's rental rules before you buy. New Jersey also requires every seller to get a certificate for working smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms before closing.

Property taxes

1.302%

$13,061

2025 average residential tax bill

2025 effective tax rate, as a share of market value

A home worth $1,000,000 on today's market would pay roughly $13,020 a year at West Long Branch's 2025 effective rate. Your actual bill depends on your assessment, so we pull the real tax record for any home you are considering.

5

GROCERIES, DINING AND SHOPPING

Where West Long Branch shops and eats

West Long Branch has two supermarkets in town, on Monmouth Road and Route 36, and the Route 35 shopping corridor in Eatontown is just to the west.

Grocery stores

IN TOWN	**ShopRite** 145 Monmouth Road, West Long Branch
IN TOWN	**ALDI** 200 Route 36, West Long Branch
EAST	**Stop & Shop** 150 West End Court, Long Branch
WEST	**Whole Foods Market** 180 Route 35, Eatontown
SOUTH	**Wegmans** 1104 Route 35, Ocean Township

Checked October 2026. Stores open, close and move, so call ahead before a first trip.

Dining

Route 36. The main highway corridor through the borough, with shopping centers and a range of places to eat.

Monmouth Road (Route 71) and Broadway. Local streets near borough hall and the university with smaller eateries.

Ocean Avenue in Long Branch. A few minutes east, the Long Branch oceanfront has the area's largest cluster of restaurants near the boardwalk.

Pier Village, Long Branch: East to the Long Branch oceanfront, with restaurants on the boardwalk and shops below apartments.

Downtown Red Bank: North to Broad Street and Monmouth Street, a downtown known for its restaurants, shops and live performances.

Shopping

Route 36 has everyday shopping in town. For more, Route 35 in Eatontown is minutes west, where the former Monmouth Mall is being rebuilt as an open air center called Monmouth Square.

6

GETTING AROUND

Roads and commuting

Route 36 runs east and west through the borough, from Garden State Parkway exit 105 in Eatontown toward Long Branch and the ocean. Route 71 runs through town on Norwood Avenue, Cedar Avenue and Monmouth Road, passing the Monmouth University campus. County Route 547, Broadway, also crosses Route 36. The nearest train is the Long Branch station on NJ Transit's North Jersey Coast Line, with trains to New York Penn Station and Hoboken. NJ Transit buses 831 and 837 provide local service. Daily shopping is along Route 36 and in neighboring Eatontown.

7

THINGS TO DO

Things to do in and around West Long Branch

Franklin Lake Park. A borough lake with a walking loop of about a mile, benches, fishing and a gazebo that groups can reserve by permit.

The Great Hall at Shadow Lawn. A 1927 mansion on the Monmouth University campus, rebuilt on the site of the estate President Wilson used as his 1916 summer White House. It is a National Historic Landmark and was the Warbucks mansion in the 1982 film Annie.

Guggenheim Library. Murry Guggenheim's 1903 Beaux Arts summer house, now part of the Monmouth University library and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Ronan Shirvanian Park bocce. Borough bocce on Thursday evenings at 5 p.m. from May through November, weather permitting.

West Long Branch Community Center. The borough's community center, with weekly yoga, chair exercise and mahjong and seasonal workshops run by Parks and Recreation.

Michael Thorne Park. A borough park with a wooded area used as a walking path.

Monmouth County Library, West Long Branch Branch. The county library branch at 95 Poplar Avenue, serving borough residents.

8

MOVING CHECKLIST

Setting up your home in West Long Branch

Tick each one off as you go. Most of these take one phone call or a few minutes online.

- [ ] **Borough hall.** West Long Branch Borough Hall, 965 Broadway, West Long Branch, NJ 07764.732-229-1756. https://www.westlongbranch.org

- [ ] **Property taxes.** Tax office phone 732-571-5984. The tax collector's office is in borough hall at 965 Broadway; the tax collector keeps office hours on Wednesday mornings and the office is staffed weekdays. New Jersey property taxes are paid quarterly, due February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1, with a 10 day grace period before interest is charged back to the due date. Not receiving a bill does not change the due date, so new owners should confirm with the tax office where bills will be sent.

- [ ] **Water and sewer.** Water: New Jersey American Water. Sewer: Two Rivers Water Reclamation Authority. Water 1-800-272-1325; sewer 732-229-8578. Water service and billing come from New Jersey American Water, so start and stop service with them directly. West Long Branch is a member town of the Two Rivers Water Reclamation Authority, which bills sewer service to each home directly on the same quarterly schedule as property taxes. The Authority asks that the closing attorney send it notice of the sale with the new owner's details.

- [ ] **Electric.** Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L), a FirstEnergy company. Outage line 1-888-544-4877.

- [ ] **Gas.** New Jersey Natural Gas. 1-800-221-0051 (customer service); 1-800-427-5325 (gas leaks, 24 hours).

- [ ] **Trash and recycling.** Trash is picked up twice a week by zone: the North Zone on Monday and Thursday and the South Zone on Tuesday and Friday, starting at 6 a.m. Find your street's zone and the recycling schedule on the Garbage Collection and Recycling Collection pages of the borough website, or call borough hall.

- [ ] **Driver's license and voting.** New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 39:3-36) requires drivers to report a new address to the Motor Vehicle Commission within one week, and the MVC prefers that you do it online. To register to vote or update your address, use the state's online voter registration or send a paper form to the Monmouth County Commissioner of Registration or Superintendent of Elections. Registration closes 21 days before an election. The Monmouth County Clerk handles vote by mail ballots.

- [ ] **Flood zone.** Look up any address on the FEMA Flood Map Service Center at msc.fema.gov. New Jersey sellers must disclose a home's flood zone and flood history. West Long Branch is inland, and its mapped flood areas are mainly along Turtle Mill Brook and Whale Pond Brook. The borough does not take part in FEMA's Community Rating System.

- [ ] **Library.** Monmouth County Library, West Long Branch Branch, 95 Poplar Avenue, West Long Branch, NJ 07764.

Checked October 2026. Phone numbers and schedules change, so confirm with each office.

WHEN YOU SELL

The certificate every sale needs

New Jersey requires a Certificate of Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Compliance before a one or two family home is sold (N.J.A.C. 5:70-2.3). Since February 3, 2025 (P.L. 2025, c.19), a portable fire extinguisher is no longer part of this certificate for one and two family homes. West Long Branch also requires its own Residential Certificate of Occupancy, issued by the borough Housing office after an in home inspection, before a home is sold or rented and before a new occupant moves in. The smoke and carbon monoxide certificate fee is added to that application and rises the closer to the change of occupancy you apply: $45 more than 10 business days ahead, $90 at 4 to 10 business days, and $161 under 4 business days. All open permits must be closed before an inspection is scheduled, and the borough does not issue temporary certificates. Even in an as is sale, the borough certificate is needed once someone moves in. Call the Housing office at 732-229-1756, ext. 119.

9

QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Questions people ask us about West Long Branch

Is Monmouth University in West Long Branch?

Yes. Monmouth University's campus is in West Long Branch. Its best known building, the Great Hall at Shadow Lawn, is a National Historic Landmark.

Was Woodrow Wilson's summer White House in West Long Branch?

Yes. In 1916 President Woodrow Wilson used Shadow Lawn as his summer White House. That house later burned, and the mansion standing today, now the Great Hall at Monmouth University, was built in 1927.

Does West Long Branch have a train station?

No. The closest station is Long Branch, on NJ Transit's North Jersey Coast Line, a short drive east.

Was West Long Branch part of Eatontown?

Yes. It was a section of Eatontown Township until 1908, when residents voted to form their own borough.

Where is the closest grocery store to West Long Branch?

West Long Branch has two supermarkets of its own: the ShopRite on Monmouth Road and the ALDI on Route 36. The Stop & Shop on West End Court in Long Branch and the Whole Foods Market on Route 35 in Eatontown are a short drive away.

10

TO FILL IN ON YOUR VISITS

Touring the sections of town

Drive or walk each part of town at different times of day. Note the streets you liked, the traffic, the water and anything to ask us about.

Around Monmouth University	
Near Franklin Lake	
Norwood Park	
Along Monmouth Road and Broadway	

Is West Long Branch right for you?

HOW WELL DOES THE TOWN FIT?	GREAT FIT	OKAY	NOT A FIT
Getting to work and family	☐	☐	☐
Groceries and everyday errands	☐	☐	☐
Restaurants and things to do	☐	☐	☐
Parks and time outdoors	☐	☐	☐
Being on or near the water	☐	☐	☐
Flood zone and insurance	☐	☐	☐
Property taxes	☐	☐	☐
The kinds of homes available	☐	☐	☐
Traffic and summer crowds	☐	☐	☐
How it feels on the streets you saw	☐	☐	☐

Streets or homes to look at again

Questions to ask us

TALK IT THROUGH

Call or text either of us

Thinking about moving to West Long Branch, or selling a home there? Call or text either of us. We will tell you what we know about the town, honestly, and help you plan the next step.



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More guides and our town guides at **franasilk.com**

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