

# Administrative Parcel Alterations in Washington State

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PRESENTED BY:

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# Most Common Pathways

*\*Note: Often different meanings for Planning and Assessor*

- **Boundary Line Adjustment**

- Minor changes to existing property lines between parcels

- **Lot Consolidation**

- *Planning*: Elimination of shared boundary line between legal parcels under common ownership into a single lot of record
- *Assessor*: Combining parcels for taxing purposes only (*legally two parcels*)

- **Segregation**

- *Planning*: Division of land (*exempt from platting*) to create new parcels
- *Assessor*: Splitting a single tax parcel into multiple parcels for taxation purposes



# **DISCLAIMER NOTE:**

Processes for BLA's and segregations will differ from county to county.



# Exempt/Large Lot Segregation Definition

- **RCW 58.17.040(6)**

- Divisions of land into lots or tracts each of which is one-one hundred twenty-eighth of a section of land or larger, or **five acres or larger** if the land is not capable of description as a fraction of a section of land, unless the governing authority of the city, town, or county in which the land is situated shall have adopted a subdivision ordinance requiring plat approval of such divisions.

- **Main Takeaways:**

- Creation of new legal lots that are exempt from State's subdivision/platting process.



# Why Segregate Property?



SELL SMALLER  
PARCELS



ESTATE  
PLANNING  
*(DIVIDE AMONG HEIRS)*



RESIDENTIAL OR  
COMMERCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT



FINANCING -  
INVESTMENT  
PURPOSES



# Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) Definition

- **RCW 58.17.040(6)**

- A division made for the purpose of alteration by adjusting boundary lines, between platted or unplatted lots or both, which does not create any additional lot, tract, parcel, site, or division nor create any lot, tract, parcel, site, or division which contains insufficient area and dimension to meet minimum requirements for width and area for a building site.

- **Main Takeaways:**

- No new lots created (*same number or fewer*)
- Parcels must be buildable



# Common Reasons for a BLA

Correct  
encroachments  
across parcel lines  
*(e.g., fence, structures, etc.)*

Improve lot shape or  
usability

Adjust for access or  
utilities

Increase  
nonconforming lot  
size

Rectify defects in  
legal descriptions



# Benton County BLA/Segregation Process:





# Assessors' involvement in the Boundary Line Adjustment process



**The Assessor's office finalizes the adjustment to the county record once all of the other departments and processes are complete.**



# **What needs to be completed before the Assessor can change the county record and cadastral map?**

- The Jurisdiction (County or City) must have all of the application requirements met for the building and planning department to approve the boundary line adjustment.
- The approval, which will include a survey showing the before and after legal description and map will be recorded along with the approval from the jurisdiction.
- Taxes must be paid on parcels affected prior to approval and recording of the BLA
- The final step for the property owner is to file deeds transferring the property to affect the BLA and make it go into affect.



**What happens if the property owner  
doesn't file deeds?**



# **How does the Assessor know when a boundary line adjustment has been completed?**

- In my county we do periodic recording queries in the auditor's system and pull all BLA's and surveys that have been recorded.



# **What happens if a BLA is recorded but no deeds are filed?**

- If a BLA is not recorded, it does not take affect.



# **What happens if the BLA is completed in the planning and building department and approved but the taxes are not paid?**

- The assessor's office can not make changes to the property line records or legal descriptions on any of the parcels affected until all of the taxes have been paid on all parcels affected by the BLA.
- Typically this means the Assessor has to wait until after 2nd half taxes are paid on all parcels before we can change our records.
- Why is that the case? It's because the new boundary lines will have new tax liability (value) and we have to clear out taxes on the before BLA land value prior to creating the new after BLA value and tax.



**If you have any of the issues discussed,  
consider looking at your processes and  
work with your planning department to  
tighten up the requirements for BLA  
approval.**





## Boundary Line Adjustment Process

Planning & Building Division  
100 W Broadway #31  
Montesano, WA 98563  
[PBD@graysharbor.us](mailto:PBD@graysharbor.us)  
360.249.4222

Start Here

### Site Plan Review

1. [Online application](#)
2. Accurate, to scale [Site Plan](#)
3. Review fee

Applicant will be issued a SPR Letter and notified online of next steps.



### Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA)

1. [Online application](#)
2. Preliminary survey (see pages 2-3 for checklist)
3. Review fee

Reviewed for compliance; if consistent, staff will issue a preliminary review with conditions of approval; valid for 2 years.



### Conditions of Approval

Applicant works through preliminary conditions including:

1. Submit final survey with all corrections for review in the online portal.
2. Pay all State and County taxes ([RCW 84.56.345](#)) to the [Treasurer](#).

Recommended to submit for final review by November 15 to allow adequate time for completion before year-end.



### Record

Schedule an appointment with a Planner to record final survey in the Auditor's Office.

The BLA process with the Planning Division is complete.

### *What's next?*

**Property Title Transfer:** When required, the applicant must file the necessary document(s) with the [Treasurer](#) and [Auditor](#). Please contact a land use attorney or Title Company if you need assistance transferring title.

**County Records Update:** The [Assessor's](#) Mapping Division will update County records to reflect changes. If you do not see a change, please follow up with the [Assessor](#).



## Preliminary Survey Checklist:

- ☐ 1. Proposed property lines in bold with dimensions.
- ☐ 2. Existing property lines to be removed, shown as dashed.
- ☐ 3. Sizes (in square feet and acres) of existing and proposed lots.
- ☐ 4. New legal descriptions for the proposed lots. Format for labeling: Parcel A, Parcel B, etc.
- ☐ 5. Addresses of the proposed lots, if assigned.
- ☐ 6. Assessor Parcel Numbers of existing lots.
- ☐ 7. Existing easements with Auditor File Number(s) and any proposed easements.
- ☐ 8. All encroachments, and above and below ground improvements within five (5) feet of property lines or within an easement must be shown (i.e. structures, wells, sewage systems, etc.)
- ☐ 9. Certifications:

### a. Property owner(s):

We, the undersigned, are the owners of the property described herein and certify that this Boundary Line Adjustment is made by our free will and consent and understand that this Boundary Line Adjustment does not transfer title or constitute a conveyance of real estate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### b. Surveyor ([RCW 58.09.080](#)):

This map correctly represents a record of survey made by me or under my direction in conformance with the requirements of the Survey Recording Act at the request of \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Seal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Certificate No.

### c. Planning:

This Boundary Line Adjustment, Case # \_\_\_\_\_, complies with all applicable requirements of Titles 16 and 17 of the Grays Harbor County Code.

Examined and approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Subdivision Administrator



d. Treasurer ([RCW 84.56.345](#)):

I hereby certify that all State and County taxes hereto for levied against the Boundary Line Adjustment described hereon, according to the books and records of my office, have been fully paid and discharged.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

e. Environmental Health:

This Boundary Line Adjustment maintains minimum lot-size standards as related to sewage disposal and water supply.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Environmental Health Specialist

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

f. Auditor:

Filed for record this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D. 20\_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_, and recorded in Volume \_\_\_\_\_ of Surveys, page \_\_\_\_\_.

BY:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy County Auditor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grays Harbor County Auditor

- ☐ 10. Notes: The BLA shall, when applicable, contain statements as required by preliminary approval. Said statements shall be numbered appropriately.



# FINAL STEPS - RECORDING

- ❖ The survey gets recorded with updated legal descriptions
  - ❖ This is not binding, does not change ownership of new legals
- ❖ A deed must be recorded to change the legal descriptions
  - ❖ This is binding, and the last step to complete process



# Challenges

Communication  
between  
departments

Common  
understanding of  
terms/acronyms

Verification of  
legal descriptions

Cost

Applicants  
confused by  
process

Survey recorded  
without deeds  
recorded

Current  
Use/Open Space  
Status

Difficult to  
decipher between  
QCD types

Checks &  
balances for  
accuracy



# Questions?

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