



DOUGLAS COUNTY

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EXEMPT PARCEL TRANSFERS/BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENTS

The Douglas County Code contains the following provision at DCC 17.12.030 related to short subdivision regulations of the county:

“The administrator may at his discretion waive the procedures normally required in the filing of a short subdivision in any case where land division is for the purpose of adjusting the boundary line or the transfer of land between two adjacent property owners which does not result in the creation of any additional building site.”

Moreover, the state subdivision act, in RCW 58.17.040(6), states the following exemption from compliance with the act:

“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.”

The following administrative guidelines to clarify these provisions apply to exempt parcel transfers/boundary adjustments in Douglas County.

A. Purpose.

1. The purpose of these administrative guidelines is to provide a process and standards for boundary line adjustments consistent with DCC 17.12.030 and RCW 58.17.040(6). Boundary line adjustments are exempt from Washington state and Douglas County’s subdivision requirements under certain specific conditions. This procedure is intended to provide an efficient, lower-cost procedure to effect minor changes to existing property lines or to aggregate existing lots.
2. Boundary adjustments are appropriate for the purposes of complying with adverse possession laws, for correcting a boundary dispute and/or where a structure has been inadvertently placed over a property line or for correcting a survey error.
3. A boundary line adjustment may not be used to significantly rearrange lot patterns or lots. Boundary line adjustments are limited to contiguous lots, parcels, tracts or divisions and shall require that at least two existing property lines remain in their original location, although their length may change. This process may not be used to accomplish the purposes for which platting, replatting, plat alterations, or plat vacations were intended and required.

4. These provisions are adopted and administered pursuant to DCC sections 14.06.010, 17.12.020 and 17.16.020.

B. Applicability.

Every division 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 shall proceed in compliance with these administrative guidelines.

C. Guidelines.

All boundary line adjustment requests shall be subject to the following guidelines:

1. A boundary line adjustment shall not result in the creation of any additional lots, sites, tracts, or parcels.
2. A boundary line adjustment shall not result in the entire relocation of lots, sites, tracts, parcels or all of the parcel's corners.
3. The adjustment is minor in nature in that the adjustment alters a boundary line by moving it to a point parallel or closely parallel to its original location and two lines are extended.
4. A boundary line adjustment shall not violate or be inconsistent with any conditions for approval of a previously filed plat, short plat, or binding site plan.
5. Where a proposed boundary line adjustment contains property located in two (2) or more zoning districts, the boundary line adjustment shall not violate the density standards imposed by the zoning code in each respective zoning district.
6. Only parcels that were legally created under the standards of RCW chapter 58.17 and DCC Title 17 at the time of creation shall be qualified for a boundary line adjustment. It may be necessary for persons proposing adjustments to submit documentation of parcel history at the direction of the administrator.
7. The boundary line adjustment process shall not be used to create a nonconforming lot or render an existing nonconforming lot more nonconforming. Once a lot is made conforming through a boundary adjustment it cannot be subsequently adjusted to be nonconforming.
8. Applicable standards of the Douglas County development regulations apply including, without limitation, lot width, area, layout, access, setbacks, lot coverage, etc.
9. The approval of a boundary line adjustment is strictly limited in effect to recognition by Douglas County that an exempt minor adjustment to property lines is occurring. A boundary line adjustment approved by Douglas County is not to be construed as statement as to the suitability of the lot for building purposes.
10. Multiple sequential boundary adjustments cannot be used to circumvent platting procedures. A parcel may be involved in a boundary adjustment not more frequently than once every twelve months.
11. All taxes, fees and assessments due on all parcels involved must be current as verified by the Douglas County Treasurer as delinquencies cannot be reassigned.

12. Special limitations may apply to lands in current use or open space tax programs, and lands in more than one taxing district. The Douglas County Assessor must verify eligibility of these lands for inclusion in a boundary adjustment. Changes in tax status may be necessary prior to approval of a boundary adjustment.
13. The boundary line adjustment process shall not be applied to adjusting easements, utilities, septic tanks, drain fields or other non-property line features.

4. Application.

Any person desiring approval of a boundary line adjustment, shall file with the administrator an application on forms provided by the administrator along with such other data that when read together discloses the following information:

1. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all persons holding an interest in the land;
2. Existing and proposed legal descriptions of the affected lots [who prepares?];
3. The Assessor's tax parcel numbers for all parcels involved;
4. A current Assessor's parcel map;
5. A brief narrative description of the proposed boundary line adjustment;
6. A scale drawing of the existing and proposed lots indicating present boundary lines as dashed and proposed boundary lines as solid; all lot measurements in feet; zoning; existing and proposed lot areas; the location of existing improvements such as buildings, wells, drain fields, roads, easements, and other pertinent features;
7. A signed, dated, and notarized statement of consent and waiver of claims by all persons holding an ownership interest in the properties involved;
8. Verification by the Douglas County Treasurer's Office that all taxes, fees and assessments due on all parcels involved are current.
9. Verification by the Douglas County Assessor's Office that the proposed boundary adjustment meets the standards of that office.
10. Application fee;
11. Recording fees payable to the Douglas County Auditor (to be submitted only upon approval).

5. Adequacy and distribution of application.

Upon submittal and acceptance of a technically complete boundary line adjustment application, and the administrator determines that it contains sufficient information to furnish as a basis for its approval or disapproval, a file number will be assigned and the application date stamped for processing. The administrator shall render a decision on the application within sixty days of the notice of a complete application, unless the applicant consents to an extension. The administrator may refer the request out to other agencies that, in the administrator's judgment, may have a jurisdictional issue or other input or information that bears directly on the application. Referral agencies, if any, shall be provided a minimum of fourteen days to comment on the application. Their failure to respond within the referral period will be considered as no comment on the application as submitted.

6. Approval and filing.

The administrator or his/her duly authorized representative, shall approve a boundary line adjustment application when all of the following conditions exist:

1. When no additional lots will result from approval of the boundary line adjustment;
2. No lot will result that contains insufficient area and dimensions to meet the minimum requirements for a building site;
3. That the plat alteration results in only a minor change in property lines.
4. The application demonstrates conformance with the Purpose, Applicability and Guidelines sections above.

Immediately following approval, the administrator will cause the boundary line adjustment to be filed with the Douglas County Auditor. A boundary adjustment shall not be considered complete until the approved application and all deeds necessary to transfer interest in the areas adjusted are filed with the Douglas County Auditor. It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to record title transfer documents.

7. Appeals.

Appeals of a decision of the administrator on an application for a boundary adjustment are governed by DCC 14.12.005 and DCC 14.12.010.