

# Boundary Line Adjustment

## What is a Boundary Line Adjustment?

The **Tacoma Municipal Code**, Section 13.04.085, provides the following guidance regarding boundary line adjustment applications in the City of Tacoma:

- A. A boundary line adjustment shall be a minor alteration in the location of lot boundaries of an existing lot. Such alteration shall not increase the number of lots nor diminish in size open space or other protected environments.
- B. Such alteration shall not diminish the size of any lot so as to result in a lot of less square footage than required in the zoning regulations for the property in question.
- C. Such alteration shall not result in the reduction of setbacks or site coverage to less than required by the zoning regulations.
- D. All lots resulting from the boundary line alteration shall be in conformance with the design standards of this chapter.

**Washington State Law**, Chapter 58.17 RCW, defines a boundary line adjustment as follows:

A division made for the purpose of adjusting boundary lines 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.

## When is a Boundary Line Adjustment appropriate?

A boundary line adjustment must comply with the above policies of the *Tacoma Municipal Code* and the *Revised Code of Washington* in order to be approved. A boundary line adjustment is permitted only if no additional lots are created and all lots conform to current zoning and development standards, including minimum lot area, width, and frontage, building setbacks, access and utility standards, and critical areas regulations.

## What is the Process for this Permit?

The applicant has the burden of proof to demonstrate that the boundary line adjustment application is consistent with the criteria for approval that are contained in *Tacoma Municipal Code (TMC) 13.04.085*. The Land Use Administrator is the decision-making authority for boundary line adjustment applications. Following are the major steps in the boundary line adjustment process. However, additional materials or studies may be requested by the City as part of the permit review.

## Getting more information

A planner is available to discuss your project in person during normal business hours (*Tacoma Municipal Building, Room 345, Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, except holidays*). Inquiries can also be made by leaving a phone message at (253) 591-5577. For information on construction permits, contact BLUS staff at (253) 591-5015.

**Permit Steps**

Prepare preliminary submittal materials – In order to research your property and clarify the process, we recommend you have a discussion with a City Land Use Administration Planner. You may contact a Land Use Administration Planner in person at the City of Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Room 345, or by calling (253) 591-5577. You will also need to work with a licensed land surveyor to create a draft drawing of the proposed boundary line adjustment that meets City standards.

Pre-application meeting – Prior to the submittal of a boundary line adjustment application, the applicant must attend a pre-application meeting – call (253) 591-5577 to request one. You will need to bring at least one print of the proposed boundary line adjustment to the pre-application meeting.

Submit your application – Following the pre-application meeting, no appointment is necessary to submit the boundary line adjustment application. You will need to compile the application materials identified on page 3 of this handout, under submittal requirements; provide the appropriate filing fees (see “Land Use Application Fees” handout); and, provide any additional items determined by staff at the pre-application meeting.

In-depth technical review – Once you have submitted a complete application, a 30 day review clock begins. City staff will visit the site and review the application materials. During the review process, staff may request additional information or studies that are needed due to the particular characteristics of the project or site. If this occurs, the review clock will stop during the time you are assembling this information, and start again once it is submitted.

Decision – Following the technical review of the application, the Land Use Administrator will issue a decision which will be mailed to the applicant. The decision will include any conditions of approval or required changes, as well as guidance related to the future development of the proposal, such as infrastructure improvements.

Appeal or reconsideration – Within 14 days of the decision date, the applicant may appeal the decision (see “Procedure for Appealing Administrative Decisions” handout). Appeals of Land Use Administrator decisions on boundary line adjustments are made to the City’s Hearing Examiner.

Recording – Approved boundary line adjustments must be recorded within **five years** of the final decision date. To record the boundary line adjustment, the applicant shall comply with the conditions of approval outlined in the Report and Decision, and submit the final boundary line adjustment in mylar format to the City of Tacoma with associated fees (see “Land Use Application Fees” handout). Once the submitted mylar has been approved by the City of Tacoma and the Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer, it is recorded with the Pierce County Auditor and the boundary line adjustment process is complete.

**Submittal Requirements**

To apply for a boundary line adjustment, you must submit the following to the Public Works Department:

- Completed Land Use Permit Application Form
- 20 copies of folded prints of the boundary line adjustment in one of the following sizes (see attached survey format sheet).
  - 20 copies on 18" x 24" paper or
  - 10 copies on 18" x 24" paper and 10 copies on 11" x 17" paper
- Current title report or plat certificate (must be dated within 90 days of submittal date) (2 copies)
- Lot closure report (2 copies)
- Copy of any Conditions, Covenants & Restrictions applicable to the property (per the requirements of *Revised Code of Washington* 58.17.215)
- Free consent statement signed by all owners of the property (form attached).  
**Note:** This is only required if the applicant is not the property owner.
- Filing fee for boundary line adjustment application (see "Land Use Application Fees" handout)
- Other information as identified by staff in the pre-application meeting

**Boundary Line Adjustment Drawing Format**


Listed below are the minimum requirements for a boundary line adjustment drawing. Boundary line adjustment maps shall be drawn at a scale no smaller than 1"=50' and the minimum letter height shall be .010". The boundary line adjustment drawing must be submitted utilizing the **Boundary Line Adjustment Standard Border** (attached). The border is available on the govME website at <http://govme.cityoftacoma.org>. Boundary line adjustment drawings must be stamped and signed by a Washington State Licensed Professional Land Surveyor and must include the following:

- Stamp and signature of a Washington State Licensed Surveyor.
- North arrow, scale and date.
- Name and address of the owner(s) of the property.
- Parcel numbers for all affected parcels.
- An original legal description of all existing parcels contained in the boundary line adjustment.
- Proposed new legal descriptions for the modified lots/parcels.
- All dimensions and bearings of the exterior boundary line adjustment boundary and proposed lots with ties to at least two known monuments on the City of Tacoma's grid system. If necessary, an alternate system may be used with prior approval of the City and with the basis of bearing indicated on the drawing.
- Names of adjacent subdivisions and adjoining property owners.
- All section lines within and adjacent to the boundary line adjustment.
- All zoning designations. All of the proposed lots shall meet the zoning requirements for lot area, width and frontage.
- Existing lots, including their layout, exterior dimensions, size, and lot numbers. The line(s) to be adjusted should be dashed and marked as such ("existing line").

- Revised lots, including their layout, exterior dimensions, size, and lot numbers. The adjusted line(s) should be solid and noted as such (“revised line”).
- Rebar and caps set at new lot/boundary corners.
- The total area of the boundary line adjustment.
- The full width of all streets and rights-of-way within and adjacent to the boundary line adjustment and the names of such streets/rights-of-way.
- Location of all existing structures and their distances from the adjusted line(s). If these structures are to be removed or moved, please note them as such.
- If the lots contain commercial buildings, the address, type of construction and current usage of each building.
- Main building setbacks required on each revised lot.
- Location of all existing fences, walls and other improvements in close proximity to the adjusted line(s), including encroachments, and their distances from the adjusted line(s).
- All existing and proposed easements within and adjacent to the boundary line adjustment. Easements should be labeled (i.e. “Proposed private access and public utility easement to benefit Lot 1”) and existing easements should also include their recording numbers. NOTE: Easements cannot be created via a boundary line adjustment and must be separately recorded.
- Location of private utility lines (sewer, water, power, gas, etc.) serving existing structures on the property if those existing structures are to remain.
- Existing contour lines of the site, as well as proposed new contours if the proposal involves re-grading, are required. Contours shall be at a minimum of 5 foot intervals.
- Location of steep slopes (40% slope or greater) on the property. For such areas, the location of the top and/or bottom of the slope shall be shown and noted, as well as any required setbacks.
- Location of any wetland or surface water body (stream, pond, lake) on or within 300 feet of the property.
- Location of any other critical area(s) on the site (geologically hazardous areas, fish and/or wildlife habitat, flood zones or aquifer recharge areas).

**TMC 13.04.085 Boundary line adjustment.**

- A. A boundary line adjustment shall be a minor alteration in the location of lot boundaries of an existing lot. Such alteration shall not increase the number of lots nor diminish in size open space or other protected environments.
- B. Such alteration shall not diminish the size of any lot so as to result in a lot of less square footage than prescribed in the zoning regulations for the property in question.
- C. Such alteration shall not result in the reduction of setbacks or site coverage to less than prescribed by the zoning regulations.
- D. All lots resulting from the boundary line alteration shall be in conformance with the design standards of this chapter.
  1. Review Process. The Land Use Administrator or designee has the authority to approve boundary line adjustments.
  2. Applications. Applications for boundary line adjustments shall be submitted to the Public Works Department in a manner consistent with the procedure for applications for short plats and shall include the following information:
    - a. The existing lot lines (shown in dashed lines) and the area, in square feet, of each of the existing lots;
    - b. The new lot lines (shown in solid lines) and the area, in square feet, of each of the new lots;
    - c. The location of all structures and access drives on the lots and the distance of each from both the existing and proposed lot lines, when such distance is less than 25 feet.
  3. Recordation. All approved boundary line adjustments shall be recorded with the Pierce County Auditor's office. (Ord. 27017 § 1; passed Dec. 3, 2002; Ord. 25851 § 2; passed Feb. 27, 1996; Ord. 25532 § 1; passed Jun. 28, 1994)

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|---|--|--|
| VOLUME MAP<br><br>SCALE 1/4" = 1 MILE<br><br>  | THIS BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT IS MADE WITH THE FREE CONSENT AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE DESIRES OF THE OWNERS.<br><br>I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE INDIVIDUAL(S) SIGNED AS A FREE AND VOLUNTARY ACT AND DEED FOR THE USES AND PURPOSES HEREIN MENTIONED.<br>GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 20__<br><br>NOTARY PUBLIC IN AND FOR THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, RESIDING AT _____ | LAND USE ADMINISTRATOR<br>APPROVED IN COMPLIANCE WITH CHAPTER 13.04 OF THE OFFICIAL CODE OF THE CITY OF TACOMA.<br><br>APPROVED FOR RECORDING<br>_____<br>CHIEF SURVEYOR, PUBLIC WORKS |
| CITY OF TACOMA<br>BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT<br>A PORTION OF 1/4 1/4 SECTION T N R E W.M.<br>ORIGINAL TRACT:<br>ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NO(S)   |  |  |
| CITY TREASURER<br>I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ALL DELINQUENT ASSESSMENTS HERETOFORE LEVIED AGAINST THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED HEREON, ACCORDING TO THE BOOKS AND RECORDS OF MY OFFICE, HAVE BEEN FULLY PAID AND DISCHARGED.<br><br>CITY TREASURER<br>ASSESSOR/TREASURER<br>I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ALL STATE AND COUNTY TAXES HERETOFORE LEVIED AGAINST THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED HEREON, ACCORDING TO THE BOOKS AND RECORDS OF MY OFFICE, HAVE BEEN FULLY PAID AND DISCHARGED.<br><br>ASSESSOR/TREASURER<br>AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATE<br>FILED FOR RECORD THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 200__ AT _____ M. IN BOOK _____ OF _____ AT PAGE _____ AT THE REQUEST OF _____<br><br>COUNTY AUDITOR<br>SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE<br>THIS MAP CORRECTLY REPRESENTS A SURVEY MADE BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECTION IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SURVEY RECORDING ACT AT THE REQUEST OF _____ IN _____ 200__<br><br>NAME _____<br>CERTIFICATE NO. _____<br>EMPLOYED BY _____<br>(SIGN AND SEAL ) |  |  |
| THIS BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT IS NOT A PLAT, REPLAT, OR SUBDIVISION<br>ORIGINAL TRACT OWNER ADDRESS & ZIP _____ PHONE _____<br><br>EXISTING ZONING _____<br>SOURCE OF WATER _____<br>TYPE OF ACCESS _____<br>SEWER SYSTEM _____<br>SCALE _____ NO. OF ADJUSTED PARCELS _____<br>DRAWN BY _____ CHECKED BY _____ JOB NO. _____   |  |  |

PROPERTY OWNER'S AUTHORIZATION:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being duly sworn, attest that I am a property owner owning property shown on the accompanying map, and that I authorize the submittal of a boundary line adjustment on the subject property to the City of Tacoma for preliminary approval.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, Managing General Partner of

\_\_\_\_\_, a Washington General Partnership, being duly sworn, attest that I am authorized to make decisions concerning the property shown on the accompanying map, and that I authorize the submittal of a boundary line adjustment on the subject property to city of Tacoma for preliminary approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO ME THIS \_\_\_\_\_  
DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_\_

(Notary Seal)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public in and for the State of \_\_\_\_\_, residing at \_\_\_\_\_