



# Tax Title/Surplus Property Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is a tax title property?**

Parcels offered for auction at tax foreclosure sales, but not sold, are deeded to the county. These parcels are called "tax title." They may still be purchased from the county through a tax title sale. Tax title properties are subject to the same risks as tax foreclosure properties.

## **What is a county owned surplus property?**

A parcel owned by the county, not acquired through tax foreclosure, can be purchased if the Board of County Commissioners has declared the parcel "surplus."

## **How is tax title or county owned surplus property purchased?**

Purchasing tax title or county owned surplus property is done through public auction, or by private negotiation.

## **Under what circumstances can tax title properties be sold through private negotiation?**

In accordance with [RCW 36.35.150](#), tax title property may be sold through private negotiation in any of the following cases:

- When the sale is to any governmental agency and for public purposes.
- When the county legislative authority determines that it is not practical to build on the property due to the physical characteristics of the property or legal restrictions on construction activities on the property.
- When the property has an assessed value of less than five hundred dollars and the property is sold to an adjoining landowner.
- When no acceptable bids were received at the attempted public auction of the property, if the sale is made within twelve months from the date of the attempted public auction.

## **What you should know...**

Tax title parcels are offered on a "where is" and "as is" basis. Pacific County makes no representation of warranty, expressed or implied, as to the physical condition, fitness for any specific use, or development potential of any property. **It is the buyer's responsibility to research the parcel(s) prior to purchasing.**

**Research suggestions:**

**TaxSifter** – This software program provided by the county allows you to look up assessment and tax information concerning the parcel.

**Physical Inspection of Property** – Consider visiting the site prior to purchasing the property. Look at exactly what is being offered for sale. Is there access to the parcel? Are the boundary lines identifiable? Is the parcel being used in some way by neighbors?

**Zoning and Land Use Issues** – What about building feasibility, zoning, and permitted land use? Are there any road projects that will impact this property in the immediate future? Most of these questions can be answered by city and county departments dealing with engineering, planning, zoning, and codes. In Pacific County the departments would be **Community Development** and **Public Works**.

**Title Insurance** – Are you able to get title insurance on the parcel? Some title companies will not provide title insurance for up to ten years after the date of the original foreclosure sale. Policies vary with each title company.

**Assessments** – Some parcels may have local improvements, special assessments or have community association dues for which payment will be due. Most special assessments are collected by the **Treasurer**. Community Association dues are typically collected by the association.

**Easements or Restrictive Covenants** – Easements and restrictive covenants are survived by tax foreclosures. Most easements are listed on the title searches and will be on record at the **Auditor's Office**.

General Administration manages tax title and county owned surplus properties. For information concerning these parcels please contact:

Paul Plakinger

Phone: 360-875-9334

Email: [pplakinger@co.pacific.wa.us](mailto:pplakinger@co.pacific.wa.us)

Other Property Sales:

**Treasurer's Tax Foreclosure Sale**

Foreclosure Website:

<http://www.co.pacific.wa.us/treasurer/Foreclosures.htm>

Renee Goodin, Treasurer

Phone: 360-875-9421 (South Bend); 360-642-9421 x2521 (Long Beach)

Email: [rgoodin@co.pacific.wa.us](mailto:rgoodin@co.pacific.wa.us)

**Sheriff Sales/Trustee-Bank Sales**

These sales are advertised in local newspapers.

No direct local contact is available.