

WAC 458-16-200 Land upon which a church or parsonage shall be built. (1) **Introduction.** This section explains the property tax exemption available under the provisions of RCW 84.36.020 to land upon which a church is to be built or upon which a parsonage or convent is being built in conjunction with and on land contiguous to a church.

(2) **Exemption.** Any property upon which a church is to be built may be exempt from ad valorem taxation if the church has a specific plan and clear intent to use the land for this and no other purpose.

(a) This property may include land upon which a parsonage or convent is to be built on land contiguous to a church.

(b) A parsonage or convent to be built on noncontiguous real property shall not be entitled to exemption until the parsonage or convent is built and occupied by a clergy person.

(3) **Burden of proof.** A nonprofit religious organization claiming this exemption must submit proof that a reasonably specific and active program is being carried out to construct a church within a reasonable period of time. Such proof shall include sufficient information from which the department will be able to determine what portion of the property will qualify for exemption when construction is completed.

(4) **Proof of required intent.** Proof that may be submitted to evidence the required intent to build may include, but is not limited to:

(a) Affirmative action by the board of directors, trustees, or governing body of the nonprofit religious organization toward an active program of construction.

(b) Itemized reasons for the proposed construction, such as:

(i) Need for expansion due to growth;

(ii) Replacement of wornout buildings; or

(iii) Initial facilities for a newly organized congregation or nonprofit religious organization;

(c) Clearly established plans for financing the construction;

(d) Proposed architectural plans that would show what portion of the property will be under actual exempt use;

(e) Building permits; or

(f) Any other proof the department may deem relevant to show an active program aimed at construction.

(5) **Time limit regarding future construction.** The length of time under which a property may be held for future construction under this section shall be dependent upon the intent evidenced under the circumstances of each individual situation. If there is no evidence of progress towards construction within a calendar year, the exemption will be removed.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070 and chapter 84.36 RCW. WSR 94-07-008, § 458-16-200, filed 3/3/94, effective 4/3/94; Order PT 77-2, § 458-16-200, filed 5/23/77; Order PT 76-2, § 458-16-200, filed 4/7/76. Formerly WAC 458-12-200.]