

WAC 458-07-030 True and fair value—Defined—Criteria—Highest and best use—Data from property owner. (1) **True and fair value—Defined.** All property must be valued and assessed at one hundred percent of true and fair value unless otherwise provided by law. "True and fair value" means market value and is the amount of money a buyer of property willing but not obligated to buy would pay a seller of property willing but not obligated to sell, taking into consideration all uses to which the property is adapted and might in reason be applied.

(2) **True and fair value—Criteria.** In determining true and fair value, the assessor may use the sales (market data) approach, the cost approach, or the income approach, or a combination of the three approaches to value. The provisions of (b) and (c) of this subsection, the cost and income approaches, respectively, shall be the dominant factors considered in determining true and fair value in cases of property of a complex nature, or property being used under terms of a franchise granted by a public agency, or property being operated as a public utility, or property not having a record of sale within five years and not having a significant number of sales of comparable property in the general area. When the cost or income approach is used, the assessor shall provide the property owner, upon request, with the factors used in arriving at the value determined, subject to any lawful restrictions on the disclosure of confidential or privileged tax information.

(a) **Sales.** Sales of the property being appraised or sales of comparable properties that occurred within five years of January 1st of the assessment year are valid indicators of true and fair value. In valuing property, the following shall be considered:

(i) Any governmental policies or practices, regulations or restrictions in effect at the time of appraisal that affect the use of property, including a comprehensive land use plan, developmental regulations under the Growth Management Act (chapter 36.70A RCW), and zoning ordinances. No appraisal may assume a land usage or highest and best use not permitted under existing zoning or land use planning ordinances or statutes or other government restrictions, unless such usage is otherwise allowed by law;

(ii) Physical and environmental influences that affect the use of the property;

(iii) When a sale involves a real estate contract, the extent, if any, to which the down payment, interest rate, or other financing terms may have increased the selling price;

(iv) The extent to which the sale of a comparable property actually represents the general effective market demand for property of that type, in the geographical area in which the property is located; and

(v) Sales involving deed releases or similar seller-developer financing arrangements shall not be used as sales of comparable property in determining value.

(b) **Cost.** In determining true and fair value, consideration may be given to cost, cost less depreciation, or reconstruction cost less depreciation.

(c) **Income.** In determining true and fair value, consideration may be given to the capitalization of income that would be derived from prudent use of the property, as limited by law or ordinance. Consideration should be given to any agreement between an owner of rental housing and any government agency that restricts rental income, appre-

ciation, and liquidity and to the impact of government restrictions on operating expenses and on ownership rights in general of such housing.

(d) **Manuals.** Appraisal manuals or guides published or approved by the department of revenue shall be considered in conjunction with the three approaches to value. The data contained in these manuals or guides must be analyzed and adjusted by the assessor to consider time, location, and any other applicable factors to properly reflect market value in the county.

(3) **True and fair value—Highest and best use.** Unless specifically provided otherwise by statute, all property shall be valued on the basis of its highest and best use for assessment purposes. Highest and best use is the most profitable, likely use to which a property can be put. It is the use which will yield the highest return on the owner's investment. Any reasonable use to which the property may be put may be taken into consideration and if it is peculiarly adapted to some particular use, that fact may be taken into consideration. Uses that are within the realm of possibility, but not reasonably probable of occurrence, shall not be considered in valuing property at its highest and best use.

(4) **Valuation of land and improvements.** In valuing any lot, tract, or parcel of real property, the assessor must determine the true and fair value of the land, excluding the value of any structures on the land and excluding the value of any growing crops. The assessor must also determine the true and fair value of any structure on the land. The total value of the land and the structures must not exceed one hundred percent of the true and fair value of the total property as it exists at the time of appraisal.

(5) **Valuation data from property owners.** The assessor may require property owners to submit pertinent data regarding property in their control, including sales data, costs and characteristics of improvements, and other facts necessary for appraisal of the property.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.070. WSR 09-04-035, § 458-07-030, filed 1/29/09, effective 3/1/09; WSR 00-01-043, § 458-07-030, filed 12/7/99, effective 1/7/00.]