

**Chapter 35.50 RCW**  
**LOCAL IMPROVEMENTS—FORECLOSURE OF ASSESSMENTS**

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**RCW 35.50.005 Filing of title, diagram, expense—Posting proposed roll.** Within fifteen days after any city or town has ordered a local improvement and created a local improvement district, the city or town shall cause to be filed with the officer authorized by law to collect the assessments for such improvement, the title of the improvement and district number and a copy of the diagram or print showing the boundaries of the district and preliminary assessment roll or abstract of same showing thereon the lots, tracts and parcels of land that will be specially benefited thereby and the estimated cost and expense of such improvement to be borne by each lot, tract, or parcel of land. Such officer shall immediately post the proposed assessment roll upon his or her index of local improvement assessments against the properties affected by the local improvement. [2009 c 549 § 2089; 1969 ex.s. c 258 § 16; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.005. Prior: 1955 c 353 § 1.]

**RCW 35.50.010 Assessment lien—Attachment—Priority.** The charge assessed upon the respective lots, tracts, or parcels of land and other property in the assessment roll confirmed by ordinance of the city or town council for the purpose of paying the cost and expense in whole or in part of any local improvement, shall be a lien upon the property assessed from the time the assessment roll is placed in the hands of the city or town treasurer for collection, but as between the grantor and grantee, or vendor and vendee of any real property, when there is no express agreement as to payment of the local improvement assessments against the real property, the lien of such assessment shall attach thirty days after the filing of the diagram or print and the estimated cost and expense of such improvement to be borne by each lot, tract, or parcel of land, as provided in RCW 35.50.005. Interest and penalty shall be included in and shall be a part of the assessment lien.

The assessment lien shall be paramount and superior to any other lien or encumbrance theretofore or thereafter created except a lien for general taxes. [1965 c 7 § 35.50.010. Prior: 1955 c 353 § 4;

prior: (i) 1911 c 98 § 20; RRS § 9372. (ii) 1927 c 275 § 1, part; 1921 c 92 § 1; 1911 c 98 § 24, part; RRS § 9376, part.]

**RCW 35.50.020 Assessment lien—Validity.** If the city or town council in making assessments against any property within any local improvement district or utility local improvement district has acted in good faith and without fraud, the assessments shall be valid and enforceable as such and the lien thereof upon the property assessed shall be valid.

It shall be no objection to the validity of the assessment, or the lien thereof:

(1) That the contract for the improvement was not awarded in the manner or at the time required by law; or

(2) That the assessment was made by an unauthorized officer or person if the assessment roll was confirmed by the city or town authorities; or

(3) That the assessment is based upon a front foot basis, or upon a basis of benefits to the property within the improvement district unless it is made to appear that the city or town authorities did not act in good faith and did not attempt to act fairly in regard thereto or unless it is made to appear that the city or town authorities acted fraudulently or oppressively in making the assessment.

All local improvement assessments heretofore or hereafter made by city or town authorities in good faith are valid and in full force and effect. [1967 c 52 § 17; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.020. Prior: 1911 c 98 § 61; RRS § 9414.]

**Construction—Severability—1967 c 52:** See notes following RCW 35.43.042.

**RCW 35.50.030 Authority and conditions precedent to foreclosure.** If on the first day of January in any year, two installments of any local improvement assessment are delinquent, or if the final installment thereof has been delinquent for more than one year, the city or town shall proceed with the foreclosure of the delinquent assessment or delinquent installments thereof by proceedings brought in its own name in the superior court of the county in which the city or town is situate.

The proceedings shall be commenced on or before March 1st of that year or on or before such other date in such year as may be fixed by general ordinance, but not before the city or town treasurer has notified by certified mail the persons whose names appear on the current assessment roll as owners of the property charged with the assessments or installments which are delinquent, at the address last known to the treasurer, a notice thirty days before the commencement of the proceedings. If the person whose name appears on the assessment rolls of the county assessor as owner of the property, or whose name appears on the tax rolls of the county treasurer as taxpayer of the property, or the address shown for the owner, differs from that appearing on the city or town assessment roll, then the treasurer shall also mail a copy of the notice to that person or that address.

The notice shall state the amount due, including foreclosure costs, upon each separate lot, tract, or parcel of land and the date after which the proceedings will be commenced. The city or town

treasurer shall file with the clerk of the superior court at the time of commencement of the foreclosure proceeding the affidavit of the person who mailed the notices. This affidavit shall be conclusive proof of compliance with the requirements of this section. [2002 c 168 § 1; 1997 c 393 § 1; 1983 c 303 § 18; 1982 c 91 § 1; 1981 c 323 § 6; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.030. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 1, part; 1927 c 275 § 5, part; 1919 c 70 § 2; 1915 c 185 § 1; 1911 c 98 §§ 34, 36, part; RRS § 9386, part; prior: 1897 c 111.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** "If any provision of this amendatory act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1982 c 91 § 10.]

**Construction—1933 c 9:** "The provisions of this act shall be applicable to the lien of assessments heretofore as well as hereafter levied and to foreclosure proceedings now pending." [1933 c 9 § 3.]

**RCW 35.50.040 Entire assessment, foreclosure of.** When the local improvement assessment is payable in installments, the enforcement of the lien of any installment shall not prevent the enforcement of the lien of any subsequent installment.

A city or town may by general ordinance provide that upon failure to pay any installment due the entire assessment shall become due and payable and the collection thereof enforced by foreclosure: PROVIDED, That the payment of all delinquent installments together with interest, penalty, and administrative costs at any time before entry of judgment in foreclosure shall extend the time of payment on the remainder of the assessments as if there had been no delinquency or foreclosure. Where foreclosure of two installments of the same assessment on any lot, tract, or parcel is sought, the city or town treasurer shall cause such lot, tract, or parcel to be dismissed from the action, if the installment first delinquent together with interest, penalty, administrative costs, and charges is paid at any time before sale. [1997 c 393 § 2; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.040. Prior: (i) 1933 c 9 § 1, part; 1927 c 275 § 5, part; 1919 c 70 § 2, part; 1915 c 185 § 1; 1911 c 98 §§ 34, 36, part; RRS § 9386, part. (ii) 1919 c 70 § 1; 1911 c 98 § 35; RRS § 9388; prior: 1897 c 111.]

**RCW 35.50.050 Limitation of foreclosure action.** An action to collect a local improvement assessment or any installment thereof or to enforce the lien thereof whether brought by the city or town, or by any person having the right to bring such action must be commenced within ten years after the assessment becomes delinquent or within ten years after the last installment becomes delinquent, if the assessment is payable in installments: PROVIDED, That the time during which payment of principal is deferred as to economically disadvantaged property owners as provided for in RCW 35.43.250 shall not be a part of the time limited for the commencement of action. [1989 c 11 § 6; 1972 ex.s. c 137 § 5; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.050. Prior: 1911 c 98 § 41; RRS § 9394.]

**Severability—1989 c 11:** See note following RCW 9A.56.220.

**Severability—1972 ex.s. c 137:** See note following RCW 35.49.010.

**RCW 35.50.220 Procedure—Commencement of action.** In foreclosing local improvement assessment liens, a city or town shall proceed by filing a complaint in the superior court of the county in which the city or town is located. It shall be sufficient to allege in the complaint (1) the passage of the ordinance authorizing the improvement, (2) the making of the improvement, (3) the levying of the assessment, (4) the confirmation thereof, (5) the date of delinquency of the installment or installments of the assessment for the enforcement of which the action is brought and (6) that they have not been paid prior to delinquency or at all. [1982 c 91 § 2; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.220. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 2, part; RRS § 9386-1, part.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.

**RCW 35.50.225 Procedure—Form of summons.** In foreclosing local improvement assessments, the summons shall be substantially in the following form:

SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON	
FOR [.....] COUNTY	
..... <i>Plaintiff,</i> v. ..... <i>Defendant.</i>	} No..... } SUMMONS FOR FORECLOSURE OF LOCAL IMPROVEMENT ASSESSMENT LIEN

To the Defendant: A lawsuit has been started against you in the above entitled court by . . . . ., plaintiff. Plaintiff's claim is stated in the written complaint, a copy of which is served upon you with this summons. The purpose of this suit is to foreclose on your interest in the following described property:

[legal description]

which is located at:

[street address]

In order to defend against this lawsuit, you must respond to the complaint by stating your defense in writing, and by serving a copy upon the person signing this summons within twenty days after the service of this summons, excluding the day of service, or a default judgment may be entered against you without notice. A default judgment is one where plaintiff is entitled to what he or she asks for because you have not responded. If you serve a notice of appearance on the undersigned person, you are entitled to notice before a default judgment may be entered.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

If judgment is taken against you, either by default or after hearing by the court, your property will be sold at public auction.

You may prevent the sale by paying the amount of the judgment at any time prior to the sale.

If your property is sold, you may redeem the property at any time up to two years after the date of the sale, by paying the amount for which the property was sold, plus interest and costs of the sale.

If you wish to seek the advice of an attorney in this matter, you should do so promptly so that your written response, if any, may be served on time.

[signed].....

.....

Print or Type Name

( ) Plaintiff ( ) Plaintiff's  
Attorney

P.O. Address.....

Dated..... Telephone Number.....

[2009 c 549 § 2090; 1982 c 91 § 6.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.

**RCW 35.50.230 Procedure—Parties and property included.** In foreclosing local improvement assessment liens, it is not necessary to bring a separate suit for each of the lots, tracts, or parcels of land or other property or for each separate local improvement district or utility local improvement district. All or any of the lots, tracts, or parcels of land or other property upon which local improvement assessments are delinquent under any and all local improvement assessment rolls in the city or town may be proceeded against in the same action. For all lots, tracts, or parcels which contain a residential structure with an assessed value of at least two thousand dollars, all persons owning or claiming to own the property shall be made defendants thereto. For all other lots, tracts, or parcels, the persons whose names appear on the assessment roll and property tax rolls as owners of the property charged with the assessments or taxes shall be made defendants thereto. [1983 c 303 § 19; 1982 c 91 § 3; 1967 c 52 § 19; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.230. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 2, part; RRS § 9386-1, part.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.

**Construction—Severability—1967 c 52:** See notes following RCW 35.43.042.

**RCW 35.50.240 Procedure—Pleadings and evidence.** In foreclosing local improvement assessment liens, the assessment roll and the ordinance confirming it, or duly authenticated copies thereof shall be prima facie evidence of the regularity and legality of the proceedings connected therewith and the burden of proof shall be on the defendants. [1982 c 91 § 4; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.240. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 2, part; RRS § 9386-1, part.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.

**RCW 35.50.250 Procedure—Summons and service.** In foreclosing local improvement assessments, if the lot, tract, or parcel contains a residential structure with an assessed value of at least two thousand dollars, the summons shall be served upon the defendants in the manner required by RCW 4.28.080. For all other lots, tracts, or parcels the summons shall be served by either personal service on the defendants or by certified and regular mail. [1983 c 303 § 20; 1982 c 91 § 5; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.250. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 2, part; RRS § 9386-1, part.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.

*Commencement of actions: Chapter 4.28 RCW.*

**RCW 35.50.260 Procedure—Trial and judgment—Notice of sale.** In foreclosing local improvement assessments the action shall be tried to the court without a jury. If the parties interested in any particular lot, tract, or parcel default, the court may enter judgment of foreclosure and sale as to such parties and lots, tracts, or parcels and the action may proceed as to the remaining defendants and lots, tracts, or parcels. Judgment and order of sale may be entered as to any one or more separate lots, tracts, or parcels involved in the action and the court shall retain jurisdiction to others.

The judgment shall specify separately the amount of the installments with interest, penalty, and all reasonable administrative costs, including, but not limited to, the title searches, chargeable to each lot, tract, or parcel. The judgment shall have the effect of a separate judgment as to each lot, tract, or parcel described in the judgment, and any appeal shall not invalidate or delay the judgment except as to the property concerning which the appeal is taken. In the judgment the court shall order the lots, tracts, or parcels therein described sold by the city or town treasurer or by the county sheriff and an order of sale shall issue pursuant thereto for the enforcement of the judgment.

In all other respects, the trial, judgment, and appeals to the supreme court or the court of appeals shall be governed by the statutes governing the foreclosure of mortgages on real property.

Prior to the sale of the property, if the property is shown on the property tax rolls under unknown owner or if the property contains a residential structure having an assessed value of two thousand dollars or more, the treasurer shall order or conduct a title search of the property to determine the record titleholders and all persons claiming a mortgage, deed of trust, or mechanic's, laborer's, material supplier's, or vendor's lien on the property.

At least thirty days prior to the sale of the property, a copy of the notice of sale shall be mailed by certified and regular mail to all defendants in the foreclosure action as to that parcel, lot, or tract and, if the owner is unknown or the property contains a residential structure having an assessed value of two thousand dollars or more, a copy of the notice of sale shall be mailed by regular and certified mail to any additional record titleholders and persons claiming a mortgage, deed of trust, or mechanic's, laborer's, material supplier's, or vendor's lien on the property.

In all other respects, the procedure for sale shall be conducted in the same manner as property tax sales described in RCW 84.64.080. [2013 c 23 § 63; 1997 c 393 § 3; 1983 c 303 § 21; 1982 c 91 § 7; 1971

c 81 § 93; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.260. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 2, part; RRS § 9386-1, part.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.

*Foreclosure of real estate mortgages and personal property liens:  
Chapter 61.12 RCW.*

*Foreclosure of special assessments by water-sewer districts—Attorneys'  
fees: RCW 57.16.150.*

**RCW 35.50.270 Procedure—Sale—Right of redemption.** In foreclosing local improvement assessments, all sales shall be subject to the right of redemption within two years from the date of sale. [1983 c 303 § 22; 1982 c 91 § 8; 1965 c 7 § 35.50.270. Prior: 1933 c 9 § 2, part; RRS § 9386-1, part.]

**Severability—1982 c 91:** See note following RCW 35.50.030.