



Converting Registered Land to Recorded Property

Torrens is a complex, labor intensive system of land registration that must be kept separate from our standard recording systems. With only five of 39 counties reporting Torrens parcels in Washington State, retaining a separate land title registry system at the state level is not efficient.

The Facts About Torrens

- A transaction that may take 5 minutes to record in the standard way can take an hour or more in Torrens.
- Of the 5 Washington counties known to have parcels in registration, King is the largest with 3,110 parcels in registration. Still, this represents only .5% of the total parcels in King County.
- Only 2 – 3 employees (in King County) are adequately trained to perform transactions in this system. If any of these employees are absent, or leave, it becomes difficult to complete Torrens transactions on time and without errors. In other counties, transactions occur infrequently and require relearning the process each time
- Only 10 states currently have land registered in Torrens.

Modern methods of recording and preserving documents are more than adequate for maintaining title and preserving public record. WSACA supports abolishing Torrens at the state level and allow the affected counties to move their properties in registration to their regular recording system.

This proposal would:

- Automatically convert registered land to recorded property on July 1 of the year after the legislative session.
- Complete the recording of documents for automatic conversion free of charge to the registered owner.
- Require notification of the registered owner by December 1 after the legislative session of the abolishment of the Torrens land registry and the entering of the certificate of title in the modern recording system.
- Close new registrations effective 90 days after legislative session.