

CHAPTER 19 - Special Districts

ARTICLE I. - Service Plans for Title 32 Special Districts (Including Metropolitan Districts)

Sec. 19-1-10. - Introduction.

- (a) The Town establishes the following as its Special District policy for: (i) the review and approval or disapproval of service plans, including any amendment thereof, for metropolitan districts and other Title 32 special districts (collectively, "Districts"); (ii) the regulation of districts; and (iii) the review of and response to metropolitan district-related inquiries from the public.
- (b) This policy is intended as a guide only. Nothing in this Article is intended, nor shall it be construed, to limit the discretion of the Town Board, which retains full discretion and authority regarding the terms and limitations of all district service plans.

The Town generally accepts the formation of districts where it is demonstrated that the formation of a district is needed to provide public services or facilities to local development and will result in a demonstrated public benefit, whether such demonstrated public benefit is provided by the district or made possible to be provided by the developer because the district exists to provide public improvements.

- (1) Districts will be permitted to conduct ongoing operations and maintenance activities where, it can be demonstrated that having the district provide operations and maintenance is in the best interest of the Town and the existing or future residents and taxpayers of the district.
- (2) For districts whose primary revenue source is property taxes, and in the absence of special circumstances, district formation will not be favorably received where the future assessed value of all property within the district at full build-out is projected to be less than five million dollars (\$5,000,000.00). The five-million-dollar-assessed valuation threshold, for districts whose primary revenue source is property taxes, will increase biennially after 2015 to adjust for increases in the Consumer Price Index for the Denver-Boulder

statistical region as prepared by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Special circumstances and special cause must be demonstrated for exceptions to be granted.

- (3) Districts, when properly structured, can enhance the quality of growth in the Town. The Town is receptive to district formation as an instrument to provide competitive financing for projects, build better and enhanced infrastructure and, where needed, create a quasi-governmental entity to provide essential and beneficial services which are otherwise not available and could not be practically provided by the Town or any other existing municipal or quasi-municipal entity, including existing special districts, within a reasonable time and on a comparable basis. It is not the intent of the Town to create multiple entities which could be construed as "competing governments."
- (4) District formation will not be favorably received, unless the district enables the underlying project to result in a demonstrated public benefit by either the district or the entity developing the district. In determining whether such project results in a demonstrated public benefit, the Town may consider all or any of the following:
 - a. Whether the district contributes to needed regional and sub-regional infrastructure.
 - b. Whether the district results in enhanced amenities.
 - c. Ways in which the proposed services or improvements exceed the Town's minimum requirements and standards.
 - d. Ways in which the existence of the district facilitates the enhancement of the services or improvements and whether the enhancements are feasible without the district.
 - e. Any other factors the Town deems relevant under the circumstances.
- (c) It is the Town's policy that (i) the costs of public improvements are to be paid from taxes and not from fees (with the exception of the a limited capital improvements fee) and that (ii) property shall not be taxed for more than a period of thirty (30) years to pay the costs of the public improvements necessary for or part of the master planned development of the project of which such property is a part.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-20. - Service plans.

- (a) Any service plan or service plan amendment submitted to the Town for approval must comply with all state, federal and local laws and ordinances, including Title 32, Article 1, C.R.S. (the Special District Act).
- (b) The service plan shall include all information required by the Act.
- (c) The service plan shall enumerate and describe all powers requested on behalf of the district. Demonstration of the need or benefit of each power is required. Powers which are not clearly needed will not be approved in the service plan.
- (d) The service plan shall describe any intergovernmental agreement which is required, or known at the time of formation of the district to likely be required, to fulfill the purposes of the district, along with supporting rationale. Execution of intergovernmental agreements or agreements for extraterritorial services (e.g., outside of the Service Area) that are not described in the service plan shall require the prior approval of the Town Board.
- (e) The service plan shall include the description of any planned inclusion into, or exclusion of property from, the district's boundaries. The service plan shall provide that inclusions or exclusions by the district that are not described in the service plan shall require the prior approval of the Town Board.
- (f) The service plan shall describe any planned extraterritorial service agreement. The service plan shall provide that any extraterritorial service agreements by the district that are not described in the service plan shall require the prior approval of the Town Board.
- (g) The service plan shall outline any anticipated plans or needs for the exercise, by the district, of its power of eminent domain. The service plan shall contain language limiting the use of the district's power of eminent domain to carry out the district's essential functions and services, as well as to implement the intent of the preliminary infrastructure plan as defined in the Model Service Plan described in Section 19-1-60 below. Additionally, the use of eminent domain will be undertaken strictly in compliance with state laws and subject to prior consent by the Town Board.
- (h) The service plan shall restrict the district's debt service mill levy authorization to thirty-four (34) mills (the "maximum debt mill levy") and operations and maintenance mill levy authorization to thirty-nine (39) mills (the "maximum

operations and maintenance mill levy"). The service plan shall restrict the district's total aggregate mill levy (debt service mill levy plus operations and maintenance mill levy) to thirty-nine (39) mills (the "maximum aggregate mill levy"). This means that the district shall not simultaneously levy a debt service mill levy equal to the maximum debt mill levy and an operation and maintenance mill levy equal to the maximum operations and maintenance mill levy. The service plan shall also limit the maximum number of years a property can be subject to a mill levy for purposes of paying the costs of public improvements to thirty (30) years. The maximum debt mill levy, the maximum operations and maintenance mill levy and the maximum aggregate mill levy shall be adjustable from the base year of 2015; provided, however, that, in the event the method of calculating assessed valuation is changed after the base year of 2015, the mill levy limitation applicable to such debt may be increased or decreased to reflect such changes, such increases or decreases to be determined by the District Board in good faith (such determination to be binding and final), so that, to the extent possible, the actual tax revenues generated by the mill levy, as adjusted, are neither diminished nor enhanced as a result of such changes. For purposes of the foregoing, a change in the ratio of actual valuation to assessed valuation shall be deemed to be a change in the method of calculating assessed valuation.

- (i) The service plan shall include debt and operating financial projections prepared by an investment banking firm or financial advisor qualified to make such projections. Said firm shall be listed in the Bond Buyers Marketplace as a provider of financial projections. The debt financial projections shall include debt issuance and service schedules and calculations establishing the district's projected maximum debt capacity based on assumptions of:
 - (1) The projected interest rate on the debt to be issued by the district;
 - (2) The projected assessed valuation of the property within the district; and
 - (3) The projected rate of absorption of the assessed valuation within the district.These assumptions must use market-based, market-comparable valuation and absorption data and shall not use an annual inflation rate which exceeds the greater of three percent (3%) and the Consumer Price Index for the preceding twelve-month period for the Denver-Boulder statistical region as prepared by the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics. The maximum debt authorization in the service plan shall not exceed one hundred percent

(100%) of the projected maximum debt capacity. The operating financial projections shall include foreseeable administrative and operation and maintenance costs.

- (j) If, after the service plan is approved, the state legislature includes additional powers or grants new or broader powers for special districts by amendment of Title 32, Article 1, Part 10, C.R.S., no such powers shall be available to or exercised by an existing district without the prior approval of the Town Board.
- (k) Every service plan shall include, in addition to all materials, plans and reports required by the Act, a preliminary infrastructure plan ("PIP") as defined in the Model Service Plan. This PIP shall include, at a minimum, a map or maps of such scale, detail and size as required by the Planning Department, providing an illustration of public improvements proposed to be built, acquired or financed by the district, along with a written narrative and description of those items and a general description of the district's proposed role with regard to the same. Due to the preliminary nature of the PIP, the service plan shall indicate that the Town's approval of the PIP shall not bind the Town in reviewing and making land use approvals.
- (1) Development fees shall not be imposed by the district, except that the service plan may authorize the imposition and collection of a one-time capital improvement fee as a source of revenue for repayment of debt and/or costs of public improvements in an amount not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500.00) per dwelling unit (the "Capital Improvement Fee"). No Capital Improvement Fee related to repayment of debt shall be imposed upon or collected from taxable property owned or occupied by any owner, or tenant of any owner, of any taxable property within the Districts, held as a dwelling or in connection with a business other than real estate development or construction within the district subsequent to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for said taxable property.
- (m) All of the limitations mandated by the Town and contained in service plans, including, but not limited to, those pertaining to the maximum aggregate mill levy and mill levy imposition term have been established under the authority of the Town to approve a service plan with conditions pursuant to Section 32-1-204.5, C.R.S. It is expressly intended that such limitations: (a) shall not be subject to set-aside for any reason or by any court of competent jurisdiction, absent a service plan amendment; and (b) are, together with all other requirements of Colorado

law, included in the "political or governmental powers" reserved to the State under the U.S. Bankruptcy Code (11 U.S.C., Section 903) and are also included in the "regulatory or electoral approval necessary under applicable non-bankruptcy law" as required for confirmation of a Chapter 9 Bankruptcy Plan under Bankruptcy Code Section 943(b)(6).

- (n) The service plan's limitations on the debt mill levy, the operations and maintenance mill levy, the limitation on the use of fees for public improvements, and certain other financial limitations are intended to strike a balance between (i) providing adequate project control and revenue to the project developer to facilitate desirable development which will result in demonstrated public benefit and (ii) providing adequate safeguards for protection of residents and taxpayers. When a district board is composed entirely of end users, the balance may shift in favor of removing some of the limitations on financial powers. The Town Board may be more inclined to remove financial limitations in scenarios where the district board wants to add public improvements which were not contemplated as part of the project developer's master plan for the project (e.g., twenty (20) years after development a neighborhood wants to renovate and expand the uses of its community center), a district-owned public improvement requires significant repairs, maintenance or upgrades and the cost properly rests with the district, or the restructuring of debt would result in a net present value savings as set forth in Section 11-56-101 et seq., C.R.S. In the event such circumstances are present, the district board should consider approaching the Town for authorization.
- (o) The service plan shall require that the district's annual public hearing regarding the subsequent year's budget, as required pursuant to Section 29-1-108, C.R.S., shall be held within the boundaries of the district or Town corporate limits, if there is property within the district which is owned by an end user. At least once every two (2) years, such public hearing shall be held after 5:00 p.m., in order to facilitate attendance by property owners and residents with daytime work schedules.
- (p) The service plan shall require that any regular or special meeting at which the district's board intends to make a final determination to issue general obligation indebtedness shall be held within the district or Town corporate limits if any property within the district is owned by an end user.
- (q)

The service plan shall require that the districts post a copy of each call for nominations, required pursuant to Section 1-13.5-501, C.R.S., in the designated locations for posting notices of meetings per Section 24-6-402(2)(c), C.R.S.

(Ord. 2018-1555 §1)

Editor's note— Ord. No. 2018-1555, § 1, adopted Feb. 26, 2018, repealed the former § 19-1-20 and enacted a new section as set out herein. The former § 19-1-20 pertained to similar subject matter and derived from Ord. 2015-1504, § 1.

Sec. 19-1-30. - Bonded indebtedness.

- (a) Original issuance of bonded indebtedness by the district prior to build-out shall be limited to that debt which can be sized, serviced and defeased with no more than thirty-four (34) mills as described in Subsection 19-1-20(h) above.
- (b) The district shall be limited to issuing new debt as provided in the financial plan set forth in the service plan. The financial plan shall limit the term for taxation of property for payment of the costs of public improvements to thirty (30) years, and such taxes are generally to be imposed within five (5) years of the first building permit within the district. Districts shall not have any authority to impose or collect a mill levy for purposes of paying the costs of public improvements on any single property for a period greater than thirty (30) years after the year of the initial imposition of the mill levy. The mill levy imposition term shall apply to refundings unless such refundings result in a net present value savings as set forth in Section 11-56-101, et seq., C.R.S., and are otherwise permitted by law.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-40. - Multiple-district structures.

- (a) It is the intent of the Town that citizen/ resident control of districts be encouraged to occur as early as possible.
- (b) Multiple-district structures may be proposed:
 - (1) When the projected absorption of the project and the public improvements to be financed are reasonably projected to occur over an extended period of time after the date of organization of the district.
 - (2) When the project has varying projected uses, such as residential and

commercial.

- (c) The service plan must fully describe and articulate the need, reasoning and mechanics if a multiple-district structure is proposed.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-50. - Dissolution of district.

The service plan shall provide for the dissolution of the district after the district's debts and financial obligations are fully defeased and the district has completed all of its operations and maintenance responsibilities. A district with long-term, ongoing operations and maintenance will not be obligated to dissolve. However, the service plan must provide that, in the event said obligations are someday undertaken by another party or are otherwise no longer the responsibility of the district, it shall be required to dissolve.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-60. - Model Service Plan.

- (a) A Model Service Plan shall be developed consistent with these policies, approved and modified from time to time by resolution of the Town Board. The Model Service Plan shall be made available to the public upon request.
- (b) All service plans submitted to the Town should follow the basic outline, form, sequence and structure of said model. Service plans should duplicate the language contained in the Model Service Plan, and justification shall be provided for any material departures. Notwithstanding the preceding, any service plan approved by the Town, or changes thereto approved in the manner set forth in such service plan, shall be deemed to be in compliance with all Town requirements.
- (c) Service plans shall be submitted in such numbers and format as specified by the Town Manager. The initial submittal shall be accompanied by a mark-up copy showing departures from the Model Service Plan.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-70. - Default of district.

- (a)

In the event that a district fails to pay its debt when due or defaults in the performance of any obligation that has been agreed to between the district and the Town, which obligation has been identified by the Town in writing as a material obligation, and such default is continuing after the delivery of notice thereof to the district and the expiration of any cure periods, the district shall be precluded from issuing additional debt, except refunding bonds issued to avoid or to cure a payment default, without the prior approval of the Town Board.

- (b) In the event that a court of competent jurisdiction has made a final determination that a district has defaulted on any of its financial obligations, and such determination is not subject to further appellate review, the district shall be precluded from issuing additional debt, except to refund or refinance a financial obligation for the purpose of avoiding or curing a default without receiving written permission from the Town Board following a public hearing on the matter.
- (c) In the event of a material modification of the service plan, the Town and the electors of the district shall be entitled to exercise their respective rights under the Act. Departures from the service plan that constitute a material modification include, without limitation:
 - (1) Actions or failures to act that create greater financial risk or burden.
 - (2) Performance of a service or function or acquisition of a major facility that is not closely related to a service, function or facility authorized in the service plan.
 - (3) Failure to perform a service or function or to acquire a facility required by the service plan.

Actions that are not to be considered material modifications include, without limitation, changes in quantities of facilities or equipment, immaterial cost differences and actions expressly authorized in the service plan.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-80. - Annual report.

- (a)

The service plan shall obligate the district to file an annual report not later than September 1 of each year with the Town Clerk for the year ending the preceding December 31; the requirements of which may be waived in whole or in part by the Town Board. The service plan shall require the annual report to include the following, unless waived by the Town from year to year or completely:

- (1) A narrative summary of the progress of the district in implementing its service plan for the report year.
 - (2) Except when exemption from audit has been granted for the report year under the Local Government Audit Law, the audited financial statements of the district for the report year, including a statement of financial condition (i.e., balance sheet) as of December 31 of the report year and the statement of operations (i.e., revenues and expenditures) for the report year.
 - (3) Unless disclosed within a separate schedule to the financial statements, a summary of the capital expenditures incurred by the district in development of improvements in the report year.
 - (4) Unless disclosed within a separate schedule to the financial statements, a summary of the financial obligations of the district at the end of the report year, including the amount of outstanding indebtedness, the amount and terms of any new district indebtedness or long-term obligations issued in the report year, the amount of payment or retirement of existing indebtedness of the district in the report year, the total assessed valuation of all taxable properties within the district as of January 1 of the report year and the current mill levy of the district pledged to debt retirement in the report year.
 - (5) Any other information deemed relevant by the Town Board or deemed reasonably necessary by the Town Manager.
- (b) In the event the annual report is not timely received by the Town Clerk or is not fully responsive, notice of such default shall be given to the board of such district at its last known address. The failure of the district to file the annual report within forty-five (45) days of the mailing of such default notice by the Town Clerk may constitute a material modification of the service plan, at the discretion of the Town.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-90. - Sanctions.

Should any district undertake any act which constitutes a material modification to the service plan, the Town Board may impose one (1) or more of the following sanctions, as it deems appropriate:

- (1) Exercise any applicable remedy under the Act.
- (2) Withhold the issuance of any permit, authorization, acceptance or other administrative approval or withhold any cooperation necessary for the district's development or construction or operation of improvements or provision of services.
- (3) Exercise any legal remedy under the terms of any intergovernmental agreement under which the district is in default.
- (4) Exercise any other legal remedy, including seeking injunctive relief against the district, to ensure compliance with the provisions of the service plan or applicable law.

All remedies available to the Town under this Section shall be cumulative and non-exclusive.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-100. - Review and approval process.

- (a) District proponents are encouraged to submit proposed service plans well in advance of election deadlines. Service plans will be reviewed once the application fee and deposit have been received. Once the Town Manager has determined compliance with the special district policy, the Town Manager shall, within a reasonable time, place before the Town Board for its consideration an ordinance adopting or amending the proposed service plan. Official action with respect to the ordinance shall be processed and governed by the Home Rule Charter and this Code. First Reading of an ordinance to approve a service plan will occur no sooner than sixty (60) days from the date of submission of the service plan and payment of the application fee and deposit. The period may be reduced to forty-five (45) days if there are no significant departures from the model service plan. The period may be otherwise reduced only with the consent of the Town Board upon good cause shown.

- (b) The proponents of the district shall cause a notice of the proposed ordinance to be mailed by first-class mail to the owners of record of all property within the proposed district and within any inclusion area specifically identified in the service plan, as such owners of record are listed on the records of the County Assessor. The notice shall be mailed at least twenty (20) days prior to first reading of the ordinance. The notice shall include the following:
- (1) A description of the general nature of the proposed services and public improvements.
 - (2) A description of the property to be included in the district and the inclusion area, if any, which description shall be by street address, by reference to lots or blocks on any recorded subdivision plat thereof or by metes and bounds if not subdivided, by tax identification number or by any other method reasonably calculated to apprise owners of the property to be included in the district.
 - (3) The place at which a map of the district, preliminary plans and specifications and the service plan may be examined.
 - (4) The date, time and place of first reading, which shall be no less than twenty (20) days following mailing of the notice required by this section (b).
 - (5) A statement that all protests and objections must be submitted in writing to the Town Manager at or prior to first reading, in order to be considered.
 - (6) A statement that all protests and objections to the district, as proposed, shall be deemed to be waived unless presented in writing at the time and in the manner specified in this Subsection.
- (c) In the event a district seeks approval for a material modification to its service plan and within the boundaries of the district is property owned by an end user, then the district shall provide notice to all owners as required by the preceding paragraph and also publish such notice in the district's legal publication. First reading shall occur no earlier than twenty (20) days after publication of such notice. Additionally, the district shall provide the Town with a detailed report on the progress of the district and why the original service plan is no longer adequate. If there is no property within the boundaries of the district owned by an end user, the district shall provide substantiation of the same to the Town by delivery of an ownership and encumbrance report or other documentation acceptable to the Town.

- (d) Such ordinance shall be conclusive of the Town's determination. No action or proceeding, at law or in equity, to review any acts or proceedings or to question the validity of the Town Board's determination pursuant to this Article, whether based upon irregularities or jurisdictional defects, shall be maintained unless commenced within thirty (30) days after the adoption of the Town Board's ordinance, or else be thereafter perpetually barred. In the manner and to the extent provided in this Article, the Town Board shall maintain continuing jurisdiction over the operations and affairs of the district and shall exercise its rights in relation thereto, as deemed appropriate by the Town Board, pursuant to the Special District Act and as consistent with this Article.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)

Sec. 19-1-110. - Fees.

- (a) With the submittal of a proposed service plan, the proponent of the district shall also pay the Town Clerk a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), together with a five-thousand-dollar (\$5,000.00) deposit to reimburse the Town for staff, legal and consultant time.
- (b) A request for an amendment or modification to a service plan shall be accompanied by a nonrefundable application fee not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) and a one-thousand-five-hundred-dollar (\$1,500.00) deposit to reimburse the Town for staff, legal and consultant time.
- (c) Any other metropolitan district inquiry referred by the Town Manager for legal or consultant review shall, in the Town Manager's sole discretion, be accompanied by a deposit deemed reasonably necessary to reimburse the Town for staff, legal and consultant time with respect to such inquiry.
- (d) Town draws against such deposit shall be based upon then-current hourly rates (including benefits) of employees working on the service plan and the applicable rates for legal and other consultants. If the amount reimbursable exceeds the deposit, the balance shall be due the Town on a monthly basis and prior to consideration of the service plan or amendment by the Town Board. Any deposit amounts remaining shall be returned.
- (e)

The purpose of staff, legal and consultants' review is to provide the Town Board with expert advice in considering the adequacy of the service plan and in forming a basis for adopting an ordinance approving, disapproving or conditionally approving the service plan for the district.

(Ord. 2015-1504, §1)