



METRO DISTRICTS

Building communities with amenities people love



Millions of Coloradans are past, current, or future residents of one of 2,200+ metro districts in the state, which offer amenities people desire and public infrastructure they depend on for a functioning neighborhood.

Public Amenities Include:

- Parks & Open Spaces
- Trees & Landscaping
- Trails & Bike Paths
- Playgrounds
- Community Gardens
- Pools & Rec Centers
- and Much More

Public Infrastructure Include:

- Streets
- Safe Crosswalks
- Sidewalks
- Water & Sewer Lines
- and Much More

RESPONDING TO THE SURGING DEMAND FOR HOMES.

In the next 7 years, Colorado needs to build 500,000 more places for people to live, including apartments, condos, duplexes, townhomes, and single-family homes.

Metro districts create more affordable housing options by serving as a cost-effective public financing tool to build large-scale housing developments.

Many metro districts are found in suburban and rural areas, where demand for new homes is high – given the availability and affordability of land.



Highlands Ranch, Central Park in Denver, and Anthem in Broomfield are examples of successful metro districts.



ENSURING GROWTH PAYS ITS OWN WAY.

Residents of metro districts enjoy greater amenities while paying higher property taxes – a system that ensures their non-metro district neighbors are not unduly burdened.

Our towns and cities can't cover those costs due to TABOR restrictions.

Without metro districts, these new communities and homes would not exist.

PROVIDING ASSURANCE THROUGH LOCAL AND STATE REGULATIONS.

A metro district is a form of local government that cannot form without approval from a local elected city council or county commission.

Once formed, metro districts must adhere to local government laws that place limits on taxation, fees, and services and state laws dealing with transparency accountability.

Homeowners also have oversight. They may attend public meetings and run for office, allowing them to influence metro district operations and financing.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT

www.metrodistricteducation.com

The Metro District Education Coalition is a nonprofit, nonpartisan network of financial, legal, and technical experts who provide expertise on metro districts. We promote improved transparency and accountability on behalf of homeowners and advocate for best practices in the formation and operations of metro districts.

Colorado Metropolitan Districts' Purpose and Benefits — Fact Sheet

PURPOSE

Metropolitan Districts are local government entities approved by a city council or county commission to provide specific services essential to a community's health, safety, economy, and well-being. They are an effective public financing tool for creating affordable housing developments. Residents pay property taxes for both basic services and enhanced amenities, ensuring growth is self-funded. Metro districts are regulated by local and state laws on taxation, services, and transparency.

2400+

There are 2,400 Colorado metro districts.¹

87%

of new homes sold in the Colorado front range in 2023 were located within a metro district;² and

90%

of Colorado master-planned communities are within a metro district.²

The concept is not new, special districts date back to the early mining camps in Colorado. As the camps grew, the residents sought mechanisms to provide essential services such as fire protection and sewer services. Today, they are a critical funding source for roads, sidewalks, streetlights, water and sewer systems, parks, and recreational facilities.

BENEFITS



Housing Shortages

Metro districts can provide essential public infrastructure development that facilitates homes being built with lower initial costs to homeowners because major upfront costs can be financed for 20 to 30 years, at lower rates than home mortgages.



Housing Affordability

Metro districts fund essential public infrastructure, such as roads, water and sewer systems, parks, and recreational facilities, in new areas. Without the metro district, those public infrastructure costs will be added to each home, significantly increasing the cost of purchasing a home.³



Growth Pays Its Own Way

Because infrastructure costs are financed locally in new projects, present residents are not taxed for newcomers' impacts. Thus, new residents are paying for their own infrastructure.



Local Control

The County or municipality that approves a Metro District's service plan typically sets limits on mill levies and the amount of debt that can be issued.



Taxation Structure

To pay the public infrastructure costs, Metro Districts typically impose property taxes within their boundaries to finance the infrastructure and services provided. This allows the costs to be distributed among those directly benefiting from the public infrastructure.



Transparency

Metro districts must be financially and operationally transparent and publicly accountable to their residents. Metro Districts are generally required by law to:

- Hold regular meetings open to residents and the public.
- Adopt and publish an annual report.
- Operate a public website.

¹ SPECIAL DISTRICTS: A BRIEF REVIEW FOR PROSPECTIVE HOMEOWNERS, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Local Government, p2.

² Metropolitan District Analysis, New Homes Transactions, Master Planned Communities, Zonda Colorado, 2023.

³ Background on Metro Districts, Colorado Association of Homebuilders, 2019.