

# Land Development

## Tale of 2 projects: Metro districts fund critical infrastructure

This article is the first in a two-part series on the use of metropolitan districts in funding the extension of public improvements to serve new growth in the initial development of the Panorama Business Park and in the redevelopment of a part of the business park that has since been re-imagined as The District, a mixed-use, urban development.

Driving south along Interstate 25 between Belleview Avenue and County Line Road, the RTD light rail, office and apartment buildings, as well as dining and entertainment venues surround the Colorado highway, but this was not always the case.

In the early 1980s, commercial development was just beginning in this corridor. The business and government leaders in Denver, Greenwood Village and Arapahoe County looked to the organization of metropolitan districts as a funding solution when the focus turned toward the unfunded but needed improvements to the I-25 interchanges at Belleview Avenue, Orchard Road, Dry Creek Road, Arapahoe Road and County Line Road as well as arterial and collector roadways and the extension of water and sewer service to serve the pro-



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posed developments.

During this time, the proposed Panorama Business Park at the southwest corner of I-25 and Dry Creek Road was a project needing public

improvements that Arapahoe County did not have the funding to provide. With the organization of the Panorama Metropolitan District to meet this need with long-term tax-exempt financing, construction of Panorama Business Park could launch.

Between 1983 and 2010, the corridor along the east and west side of I-25 between Belleview Avenue and County Line Road became well-established and the RTD light-rail system was extended to serve this area. As a result, the evolution of consumer and local government demand for diversification in housing and more urban development in the vicinity of Panorama Business Park continued. In these intervening years, the city of Centennial was established and the property within



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the business park was annexed. The vision of the city and Glenn Jones, the principal behind Jones Intercable Inc. and Jones International University located in

the business park, aligned in conceptualizing the redevelopment of the Jones Intercable Headquarters building and surrounding property into an urban mixed-use development named the Jones District that was just recently rebranded as The District.

The need for public improvements to support the denser urban development of The District would require additional financing for the installation of public improvements and for operation and maintenance of additional public spaces and programming. Discussions with the city and the Panorama Metropolitan District on funding of the public improvements resulted in the exclusion of The District project from Panorama Metropolitan District and the organization of the Jones Met-

ropolitan District Nos. 1-5 in 2020 and contracting to organize the Jones District Community Authority Board in 2020.

The Jones District Community Authority Board will provide the public improvements to support the redevelopment of The District as a mixed-use community with dense office space as well as retail, hotel and residential units that will complement the surrounding business park. This article will examine the historic role of the Panorama Metropolitan District in funding public improvements and providing services. Part II of this article will focus on the role of the Jones Metropolitan District Nos. 1-5 through the Jones District Community Authority Board in providing services to The District and the support provided by Panorama Metropolitan District toward that goal.

### Suburban Office Park: Panorama Metropolitan District

In the 1950s, Louise G. Larrick owned the land generally located south of Dry Creek Road, west of I-25 and east of Yosemite Street, which was included in what was to become Panorama Business Park. Louise built her home on the land and was the original

developer of the business park, while living in her home on the land until 2013. Many will recall seeing horses and llamas on her property as they drove south of Dry Creek Road looking to the west of I-25.

Louise was the organizer of the Panorama Metropolitan District, one of 10 metropolitan districts, some approved for organization by Denver, some by Greenwood Village and some by Arapahoe County. All these metropolitan districts participated in the 1980s to finance the I-25 interchanges and public improvements to serve the commercial projects within their boundaries that none of the other governments had the funding to provide. Without these metropolitan districts, including Panorama Metropolitan District, the places to live, work, shop, dine and recreate in the area from the Denver Tech Center south to the Inverness Business Park would not be what they are today.

During the 1980s, Panorama Business Park became the home of several major corporations, including Amoco Oil Co. and its successor, Cypress Amex, Colorado Farm Bureau

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## GH Phipps

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honored to have been selected for this important construction project on behalf of Ivinson Memorial Hospital, which has been providing world-class care to the people of Wyoming and beyond since 1917," said Cris Goldy, general manager of GH Phipps Laramie office. "Our team is looking forward to beginning work on this renovation and continuing to forge outstanding relationships and achieve the construction goals of all of our clients."

The project will be completed in two phases. Phase I consists of remodeling approximately 2,400 square feet of existing space located



Laramie, Wyoming's Ivinson Memorial Hospital will be built in two phases.

on the second floor of the hospital into a new inpatient rehabilitation suite, along with renovations in portions of the existing medical surgical inpatient unit.

Phase II will include the renovation of approximately

21,228 sf of existing inpatient and extended care units on the third floor of the hospital into a new family care center and the expansion and upgrades to the existing inpatient pharmacy. ▲

## McGeady

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and Jones Intercable.

The Panorama Metropolitan District issued several series of bonds to finance the business park's share of Dry Creek Road and the interchange at Dry Creek Road and I-25, roads internal to the business park, landscaping and detention ponds and other public improvements.

By 2018, Louise had conveyed her homestead to Glenn Jones, the Larrick home and Jones Intercable building had been demolished and the property was ready for redevelopment. In that same time period, Panorama Metropolitan District anticipated the repayment of all its bonds by December

2023, had a commitment to fund an additional \$15 million in public improvements to support the remaining development in its boundaries and a limited annual budget to manage for ongoing maintenance of medians, monuments and detention ponds.

It was in this context that discussions began regarding the funding that would be needed to serve a dense urban mixed-use development within the Panorama Metropolitan District. How these discussions ended in a positive outcome for both the Panorama Metropolitan District and then-to-be organized Jones Metropolitan Districts will be explored in Part II of this article. ▲

## Erie

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partnership of the town of Erie throughout each step of the planning and development process thus far," said Majerik. "The town has provided thoughtful input on this project already, and we look forward to continuing working together."

In addition to creating a new residential community, SLC will make significant investments

to benefit the entire Erie community, including the donation of 10 acres and \$3 million for the creation of a new neighborhood park as well as donating 15 acres to St. Vrain Valley School District for a planned middle school. Additional plans to benefit the community are in development.

The master planned community was designed by SLC. PCS Group Inc. is the land plan-

ner and landscape architect for the project, and Matrix Design Group is the engineer of record.

"We intentionally search the country for markets that demonstrate a commitment to good planning, prioritization of active lifestyles, and an appreciation for great aesthetics, and Denver easily fits the bill," said Brian Sewell, president and chief operating officer of Southern Land Co. ▲

## Coyne

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Due to this issue, Table Item 11 was revised to be more transparent and easier to understand for all parties to the transaction. Notably, the word underground has been written into the definition alongside two other options that were created specifically to be included in Table A Item 11. In 2021, a client has a choice on this option, "if" they

will require underground utilities, and how they want those utilities to be established.

• Former Table A Item 18 (location of wetland delineation markers): This item has been removed as this requirement is not a title matter. Items 19, 20 and 21 were all renumbered as a result of this omission to 18, 19 and 20. ▲

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