

FAQs: Notice of Public Hearing for Amendment to Service Plan of Special District

The purpose of this document is to provide general information regarding the *Notice of Public Hearing for Amendment to Service Plan of Special District* that the reader may have recently received related to the following metropolitan districts:

Forest Trace Metropolitan District Nos. 1 and 3
Inspiration Metropolitan District
Kings Point South Metropolitan District Nos. 1-3
Overlook at Kings Point South Metropolitan District
Prairie Point Metropolitan District Nos. 1-3
Pronghorn Valley Metropolitan District
Sorrel Ranch Metropolitan District
Whispering Pines Metropolitan District No. 1

These districts are referred to herein as the “Amending Districts.” If you have additional questions not covered in this document, or for more information, please contact the specific metropolitan district listed above.

Q: Why have I received a notice of a public hearing at the City of Aurora to revise the metro district’s service plan?

A: You have received the notice because you own property within one or more of the above-described metropolitan districts, or you are a taxing entity located within 3-miles of such district(s). The Boards of Directors of the Amending Districts are seeking the Service Plan Amendment described in the notice.

Q: What is a metro district?

A: A metropolitan district, or metro district in short, is a standalone government entity separate from the City of Aurora that was formed for a specific community to assist in financing public infrastructure and for operating and maintaining some of that infrastructure.

Q: What is a Service Plan?

A: Each metro district is governed by a unique written “Service Plan,” which was previously approved by the City of Aurora as required by state law when the district was formed.

Q: What revisions are being proposed to the service plan?

Since 2004, the City of Aurora’s model service plan requires the district to impose an additional property tax on all property in the district to finance regional public improvements that benefit the district. The improvement projects are intended to be large, regional projects that have limited funding sources available. This additional property tax is known as the “Aurora Regional Improvement mill levy, or “ARI Mill Levy.” The proposed amendment to the Service Plans of Amending Districts, which will be considered at a public hearing before the Aurora City Council, modifies the ARI Mill Levy as described in the notice. For more explanation regarding the proposed amendment, see the document entitled *Summary of Proposed Service Plan Amendments for South Aurora Regional Improvement Authority (“SARIA”) Member Districts; Revisions to ARI Mill Levies (January 2025)*.

Q: Will the proposed Service Plan Amendment increase my metro district's debt authorization or allow my metro district to increase its operations and maintenance mill levy or debt service mill levy?

A: No. The limited purpose of the Service Plan amendments is to modify the ARI Mill Levy of each Amending Member. No other changes are requested to the service plans of the Amending Members.

Q: Where do the funds from the ARI Mill Levy go?

A: The ARI Mill Levy revenues of the Amending Districts are remitted to the South Aurora Regional Improvement Authority ("SARIA") and are pledged to the repayment of bonds issued by SARIA used to fund regional transportation improvements.

Q: What is SARIA and when was it formed?

A: SARIA was formed in 2017 by a contract entered into between the City of Aurora and a number of metropolitan districts, including the Amending Districts. Each of the districts voluntarily joined SARIA along with other districts to have a voice in what improvements the ARI Mill Levy revenues are used to finance. SARIA is currently comprised of 22 metropolitan districts as members along with the City of Aurora. All of the metro districts that are members of SARIA are required to impose the ARI Mill Levy.

Q: How is SARIA governed?

A: SARIA's Board of Directors is comprised of representatives appointed by each member district and the City of Aurora. The member districts and the City each appoint one person to SARIA's Board of Directors.

Q: Are all communities in South Aurora part of SARIA and paying the same ARI Mill Levy property tax?

A: No. The ARI Mill Levy was first required by the City of Aurora for all newly formed metro districts beginning in 2004. Communities with metro districts formed before 2004 were not required to impose an ARI Mill Levy, so property owners in any such communities do not have to pay the ARI Mill Levy.

Q: What has SARIA done?

A: SARIA previously issued bonds in 2018 in the amount of \$11,265,000. Funds from these bonds were used to support the following regional transportation improvements:

- Harvest Road Improvements—Alexander to Orchard (Completed)
- Quincy & E-470 Ramp Reconfiguration (Completed)
- Quincy Avenue Lane Additions—Plains to E-470 (Completed)
- Gun Club Road Improvements—Quincy to Aurora Parkway (Incomplete; additional funding needed)
- Aurora Parkway Extension—Half Section Bridge (Incomplete; additional funding needed)
- Gartrell Road Improvements—Dry Creek to Aurora [Parkway] (with Bridge and Ramps) (Incomplete; additional funding needed)

Q: Is SARIA in debt? Is more debt anticipated?

A: SARIA issued \$11,265,000 in bonds in 2018 and plans to refinance those bonds and gain additional funds with a new bond issue in 2025. The new funds will finance the completion of a new Aurora Parkway bridge over E-470 and improvements to the Gartrell Road bridge over E-470, and will provide partial funding for the City's planned Gun Club Road improvements.

Q: Is my metro district responsible for SARIA's debt?

A: No. Only SARIA is responsible for the repayment of its bonds. SARIA's bonds are not obligations of the SARIA member districts or the City. The only obligation of the SARIA member districts to SARIA is to impose and remit their applicable ARI Mill Levies to SARIA.