



TOWN OF ELIZABETH

PATRICK G. DAVIDSON, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

TO: Honorable Mayor, Mayor Pro Tem, and Members of the Board of Trustees
FROM: Patrick Davidson, Town Administrator
DATED: September 10, 2024
SUBJECT: Response to Citizen Concerns

In working with the Public, Town Staff receive dozens of questions and comments per week which are not only of interest to the citizen but might also be useful for the community as a whole. Consequently, in early July 2024, Mayor Payne asked that answers to broader questions not only be addressed directly to the resident, but also incorporated into semi-regular responses for the public. The first of these responses was included in the July 23, 2024, Board Packet. Below are the most recent questions/concerns and the Staff's responses.

RESPONSE TO CITIZEN CONCERNS

THE TOWN KEEPS INCREASING MY TAXES, WHEN WILL IT STOP?

The Town cannot and does not raise taxes without a vote of the residents of the Town. In keeping with both the Colorado Constitution and related legislation and statutes, the only way the Town may raise taxes is through a vote of the citizens of the Town. No such vote has taken place.

WATER CONSERVATION.

The Town has had a considerable number of questions and concerns about water usage this summer. Town Staff have seen single family residences using 35,000 gallons of water [or more] per month. In Colorado, the average person uses between 85-100 gallons of water per day. Obviously, households vary based on the number of residents, medical conditions, bathing habits and the like but an "average" Colorado household of four (4) uses approximately 150,000 gallons per year. (CSU Extension, [Link to CSU Extension Water Conservation Facts](#)) If you find your water consumption higher than these amounts, please contact Public Works or the Clerk's Office so we can discuss water usage and determine if leaks exist in the water system.

AMENDMENTS TO PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT (PUD).

There have been comments made asserting that Staff members are inconsistent with their position towards PUDs. Traditionally, PUDs were considered "zoning of last resort." In other words, when insufficient zoning options existed due to the proximity of the property, adjacent land uses, the physical layout of the property, or other factors, PUDs were used to find a way to still provide for development. In the case of Elizabeth, PUDs [similar to CMU] have been over-used in the past as a means of addressing development.

To add to the complexities of this matter, the zoning code for Elizabeth places extensive restrictions on land uses, which assuredly, were designed to slow down or even thwart development. As such, developers simply found a means around traditional zoning in the Town to accomplish their desired end. PUDs may be amended, but such amendments are tightly constrained under both the existing development plans, and the specific zoning authorized within the creation



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documents. The end result is that PUD zoning may be subject to minor amendments over time, but PUDs fail to consider those lands decades or more into the future.

IS THE TOWN'S DRINKING WATER TESTED?

Wellhead water samples are taken 2-3 times a day, and as many as 4-5 times a day, depending on the needs for operations. These samples are taken 24/7/365. These tests then provide actual water data of what is being distributed throughout the Town's potable water system. The water system was inspected by CDPHE last year and is inspected every 2-3 years when good water quality exists as identified by the daily samples. Water lines are flushed every 6 months to ensure clean water within distribution lines. When additional customers are brought on-line, the tie-in is inspected, and the individual line inspected.

WHAT IS THE CAPACITY OF THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT?

The plant currently processes approximately 170,000 gallons of the CDPHE permitted 500,000 gallons of wastewater per day and operates at approximately 34 percent of Design and Operational capacity. The ability to process additional wastewater already exists, as the plant is oversized. However, additional capacity could be undertaken for approximately \$100,000.00 for the need of additional UV sterilization equipment and would first be approved by CDPHE when the Town's wastewater treatment reaches 85 percent (425,000 gallons per day) of the now permitted capacity of 500,000 gallons per day.

The wastewater plant is due for an inspection in 2024-2025 based on the schedule and availability of CDPHE. The plant has had zero deficiencies or issues in sample compliance, operations or equipment since plant start up in 2010, with on-sight inspections every 2-3 years. In terms of wastewater collection lines, the lines are jetted with video footage and cleaned yearly. Spot checks of the system are done quarterly.

WHY AREN'T DOGS ALLOWED IN PARKS?

Traditionally, domesticated animals have not been allowed in public parks in Elizabeth. This includes not only dogs, but other animals which might otherwise be allowed on private property within the Town limits. In 2023, the Board of Trustees amended Section 7-7-310 of the Town Code to specifically allow restrained dogs within Running Creek Park for certain events. From 2020, dogs and other domestic animals have been allowed on the Town's trail system under Section 11-6-100(c) of the Municipal Code.

TRAFFIC CONTROL (TRAFFIC LIGHTS AND STOP SIGNS).

The Town receives regular comments about too many or too few traffic lights, stop signs, and other traffic control devices. The location and placement of traffic control devices is controlled by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) as established by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Obviously, there are times in which the manual is not applied, or the Town's traffic consultants provide recommendations. However, this is the standard for placement of control devices.



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In terms of traffic lights, those located on HWY 86 are the responsibility of the State and are mandated by the State at specific locations. The State takes into consideration their own traffic studies, as well as those that may be conducted by a developer and the Town in determining the type and placement of lights. Developers are required to advance the funds necessary for lights, with the costs starting at \$600,000 per intersection. Once installed, all maintenance of the light is the responsibility of the State of Colorado.