

ADVANTAGES TO FORMING A LIBRARY DISTRICT

- Funding is secured directly from library users rather than competing with other city or county departments.
- Funding is relatively stable – based on property taxes, not sales taxes.
- Because funding is more stable, so is the consistency of the planning process.
- Autonomy, greater independence in decision making, greater focus on library services, greater freedom from political infighting.
- A single purpose district has greater tax-payer accountability and organizational focus.
- Unspent dollars can be retained for future years. No “use it or lose it.”
- Generally speaking, library districts tend to be better funded than other public libraries.

DISADVANTAGES TO FORMING A LIBRARY DISTRICT

- New costs, such as building insurance, facilities maintenance, legal fees, personnel administration, and technology management.
- Adherence to state budget regulations – learn a new set of rules, pay for your own audit, etc.
- State budget limits and constitutional limits such as “TABOR” and “Gallagher” apply to library districts directly.
- Mill levy increases depend on election campaigns.
- The transition year is difficult, requiring a large board and staff commitment – setting policy, legal advice, education, etc. Then step back!!
- Nobody to blame but yourself! It requires a cultural shift from “Blame it on the council or commission,” to “WE are responsible.”