

11.5 MODEL DIG ONCE ORDINANCE⁴²

WHEREAS, obstructions and excavations in City/Town/County rights of way disrupt and interfere with public use of the Rights of Way; and

WHEREAS, obstructions and Excavations in City/Town/County Rights of Way result in loss of parking and loss of business to merchants and others whose places of business are in the vicinity of such obstructions and Excavations; and

WHEREAS, it is desirable to adopt policies and regulations which will enable the City/Town/County of _____ to gain greater control over the disruption and interference with the public use of public streets and Rights of Way, in order to provide for the health, safety and well-being of the City's/Town's/County's residents and users of City/Town/County Rights of Way; and

WHEREAS, significant public funds have been invested to acquire, build, maintain and repair the streets within the City/Town/County, and Excavations in the Rights of Way reduce the useful life of the pavement infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, significant public funds have been invested to place and maintain Landscaping within Rights of Way in the City/Town/County and Excavations in the Rights of Way cause damage to, and increase the costs of maintaining that Landscaping; and

WHEREAS, at the present time, the City's/Town's/County's Department of Public Works does not have [or desires to update, as appropriate] a detailed map or database indicating the location, nature, or extent of the system underground utility, communications and similar Facilities; and

WHEREAS, the various public and commercial utilities, broadband and communications providers and similar entities which install, maintain, and operate Facilities under the City's/Town's/County's Rights of Way are constrained, from time to time, to make excavation cuts which degrade the surfaces of these Rights of Way, thereby reducing their useful life; and

WHEREAS, demand for access to broadband services is growing, and in order to fill such demand, more broadband network infrastructure is being installed in Rights of Way; and

⁴² This Model Open Trench/Dig Once Ordinance is intended as a starting point to address issues that local governments might include in their own rights of way codes. It may be considered as a separate ordinance or for inclusion in a more comprehensive ordinance government rights of way management, permitting and construction. All provisions relate in some way to coordinating and attempting to minimize excavations, but all may not be appropriate in every jurisdiction. The provisions of this Model may also, where authorized, be modified and adopted as local policies or regulations.

WHEREAS, in other jurisdictions, the demand for access and the number of entities seeking to install Facilities has sometimes resulted in multiple, serial Excavations within the Rights of Way, which can and has resulted in traffic disruption, a weakening of pavement integrity, and a shortening of the useful life of paved surfaces; and

WHEREAS, while Colorado state statutes, particularly, C.R.S. 38-5.5-109, contains some procedures for addressing joint trenching in connection with broadband provider operations in the Rights of Way, at the present there is no comprehensive mechanism nor legal requirement that all public and commercial entities coordinate Excavation in the Rights of Way, and construct Facilities in newly developed areas to minimize future Excavations; and

WHEREAS, the [City/Town/County] of _____ intends to responsibly manage its Rights of Way by anticipating such demand and planning accordingly.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it enacted by the City/Town/County of _____ as follows:

I. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

A. Purpose: to provide principles and procedures for the coordination of construction Excavation within any public Rights of Way, and to protect the integrity of the Rights of Way and road system.

B. Objectives. Public and private uses of Rights of Way for location of Facilities employed in the provision of public services should, in the interests of the general welfare, be accommodated; however, the City/Town/County must insure that the primary purpose of the Rights of Way, namely the safe and efficient passage of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, is maintained to the greatest extent possible. In addition, the value of other public and private installations, Facilities and properties should be protected, competing uses must be reconciled, and the public safety preserved. The use of the Rights of Way corridors for location of Facilities is secondary to these public objectives. This ordinance is intended to assist in striking a balance between the public need for efficient, safe transportation routes and the use of Rights of Way for location of Facilities by public and private entities. It thus has several objectives:

1. To insure that the public health, safety and welfare is maintained and that public inconvenience is minimized.

2. To facilitate work within the Rights of Way through the standardization of regulations.

3. To conserve and fairly apportion the limited physical capacity of the public Rights of Way held in public trust by the City/Town/County.

4. To promote cooperation among the Applicants and Permittees (as defined herein) and the City/Town/County in the occupation of the public Rights of Way, and work therein, in order to (i) eliminate duplication that is wasteful, unnecessary or unsightly, (ii) lower the Permittee's and the City's/Town's/County's costs of providing services to the public, and (iii) minimize Rights of Way Excavations.

II. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Chapter the following words shall have the following meanings:

A. "Applicant" means an owner or duly authorized agent of such owner, who has submitted an application for a Permit to Excavate in the Rights of Way.

B. "City"/"Town"/"County" means the City/Town/County of _____, Colorado.

C. "Conduit" means a single enclosed raceway for cables, fiber optics or other wires, or a pipe or canal used to convey fluids or gases.

D. "Department" means the Department of Public Works.

E. "Developer" means the person, partnership, corporation, or other legal entity who is improving property within the City/Town/County and who is legally responsible to the City/Town/County for the construction of improvements within a subdivision or as a condition of a building permit or other land use or development authorization.

F. "Director" means the Director of Public Works of the City/Town/County or his/her authorized representative.

G. "Emergency" means any event which may threaten public health or safety, or that results in an interruption in the provision of services, including, but not limited to, damaged or leaking water or gas conduit systems, damaged, plugged, or leaking sewer or storm drain conduit systems, damaged electrical and communications facilities, and advanced notice of needed repairs is impracticable under the circumstances.

H. "Excavate" or "Excavation" means any Work in the surface or subsurface of the Rights of Way, including, but not limited to opening the Rights of Way; installing, servicing, repairing or modifying any Facility(ies) in or under the surface or subsurface of the Rights of Way, and restoring the surface and subsurface of the Rights of Way.

I. "Facilities" means, including, without limitation, any pipes, conduits, wires, cables, amplifiers, transformers, fiber optic lines, antennae, poles, ducts, fixtures and appurtenances and other like equipment used in connection with transmitting, receiving, distributing, offering, and providing broadband, utility and other services.

J. "Landscaping" means materials, including without limitation, grass, ground cover, shrubs, vines, hedges, or trees and non living natural materials commonly used in landscape development, as well as attendant irrigation systems.

K. "Major Work" means any reasonably foreseeable Excavation that will affect the Rights of Way for more than five (5) consecutive calendar days.

L. "Owner" means any Person, including the City, who owns any Facilities that are or are proposed to be installed or maintained in the Rights of Way.

M. "Permit" means any authorization for use of the Rights of Way granted in accordance with the terms of this ordinance, and other applicable laws and policies of the City/Town/County.

N. "Permittee" means the holder of a valid Permit issued pursuant to this Chapter and other applicable provisions of applicable law for Excavation in the Rights of Way.

O. "Person" means any person, firm, partnership, special, metropolitan, or general district, association, corporation, company, or organization of any kind.

P. "Rights of Way" means any public street, road, way, place, alley, sidewalk or easement, that is owned, held or otherwise dedicated to the City/Town/County for public use.

Q. "Work" means any labor performed on, or any use or storage of equipment or materials, including but not limited to, construction of streets and all related appurtenances, fixtures, improvements, sidewalks, driveway openings, street lights, and traffic signal devices. It shall also mean construction, maintenance, and repair of all underground structures such as pipes, conduit, ducts, tunnels, manholes, vaults, buried cable, wire, or any other similar Facilities located below surface, and installation of overhead poles used for any purpose.

III. POLICE POWERS

A Permittee's rights hereunder are subject to the police powers of the City/Town/County, which include the power to adopt and enforce ordinances, including amendments to this ordinance, and regulations necessary to the safety, health, and welfare of the public. A Permittee shall comply with all applicable ordinances and regulations enacted, or hereafter enacted, by the City/Town/County or any other legally constituted governmental unit

having lawful jurisdiction over the subject matter hereof. The City/Town/County reserves the right to exercise its police powers, notwithstanding anything in this ordinance or any Permit to the contrary. Any conflict between the provisions of the ordinance or a Permit and any other present or future lawful exercise of the City's/Town's/County's police powers shall be resolved in favor of the latter.

IV. JOINT PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION; COORDINATION OF PLANNED EXCAVATIONS

A. Excavations in City/Town/County Rights of Way disrupt and interfere with the public use of those Rights of Ways and can damage the pavement and Landscaping. The purpose of this section is to reduce this disruption, interference and damage by promoting better coordination among Applicants and Permittees making excavations in City/Town/County Rights of Way and between these Persons and the City/Town/County. Better coordination will assist in minimizing the number of Excavations being made wherever feasible, and will ensure the Excavations in City/Town/County Rights of Way are, to the maximum extent possible, performed before, rather than after, the resurfacing of the Rights of Way by the City/Town/County.

B. Any Permittee owning, operating or installing facilities in City/Town/County Rights of Way, providing water, sewer, gas, electric, broadband, communication, video or other utility or utility-like services, shall meet annually with the Director, at the Director's request to discuss Permittee's excavation master plan. At such meeting, to the extent not already in possession of the City/Town/County, Permittee shall submit documentation, in a form required by the Director, showing a location of the Permittee's existing Facilities in the City/Town/County Rights of Way. Permittee shall discuss with the Director, its excavation master plan, and identify planned Major Work in the City/Town/County. The Director may make his own record on a map, drawing or other documentation, of each Permittee's planned Major Work in the City/Town/County; provided, however, that no such document prepared by the Director shall identify a particular entity, or the planned Major Work of that particular entity. An excavation master plan shall be submitted in both hard copy and digital format. As used in this subsection, the requirement to identify planned Major Work refers to any Major Work planned to occur more in the ensuing three (3) years after the date that the Permittee's master plan or update is discussed. Between the annual meetings to discuss planned Major Work, a Permittee shall use its best efforts to inform the Director of any substantial changes in the planned Major Work discussed at the annual meeting.

C. The Director shall review the major excavation plan and identify conflicts and opportunities for coordination of Excavations. The Director shall notify affected Owners and Permittees of such conflicts and opportunities to the extent necessary to maximize

coordination of Excavation. Each Applicant for a Permit shall coordinate, to the extent practicable, with each potentially affected Owner and Permittee to minimize disruption in the Rights of Way.

D. The City/Town/County may disclose information contained in a Permittee's master excavation plan to any public or private entity planning on conducting Excavation activities in the Rights of Way only on a need-to-know basis in order to facilitate coordination among excavators and to avoid unnecessary Excavation in the Rights of Way. To the maximum extent permissible under the Colorado Open Records Act, as amended, the City/Town/County shall not otherwise disclose to the public any information contained in a master excavation plan submitted by a Permittee that is proprietary, trade secret or is otherwise protected from disclosure; provided, however that the City/Town/County shall have no duty to decline to disclose any information that the Permittee has not identified on its face as proprietary, trade secret or otherwise protected from disclosure. The City/Town/County shall notify a Permittee of any request for inspection of public records that calls for disclosure of any master excavation plan on which any information has been identified as proprietary, trade secret or otherwise protected from disclosure. The City/Town/County shall consult with its legal counsel regarding any such request and shall inform the affected Permittee either that the City/Town/County will refuse to disclose the protected information or, if there is no proper basis for such refusal, that the City/Town/County intends to disclose the requested information unless ordered otherwise by a court.

E. The Director shall prepare a Repaving Plan showing the Rights of Way resurfacing planned by the City/Town/County. For purposes of this section, the Repaving Plan shall include a Landscaping or other Rights of Way improvement plan. The Repaving Plan shall be revised and updated on an annual basis. The Director shall make the City's/Town's/County's Repaving Plan available for public inspection. In addition, after determining the City's/Town's/County's Rights of Way resurfacing Work that is proposed for each year, the Director shall send a notice of the proposed Work to all Permittees that have had an annual meeting with the Director, and those broadband providers that are identified on the list maintained by the Colorado Department of Transportation pursuant to C.R.S. 39-5.5-109 (1)(b).

F. Prior to applying for a Permit, any Person planning to Excavate in the City's/Town's/County's Rights of Way shall review the City's/Town's/County's Repaving Plan on file with the Director and shall coordinate, to the extent practicable, with the utility and street Work shown on such plans to minimize damage to, and avoid undue disruption and interference with the public use of the Rights of Way.

G. In performing location of Facilities in the Rights of Way in preparation for construction under a Permit, Permittee shall compile all information obtained regarding its or any other Facilities in the Rights of Way related to a particular Permit, and shall make that information available to the City/Town/County in a written and verified format acceptable to the Director. If the Permittee fails to provide the locate information requested by the City/Town/County, the City/Town/County may obtain this information and charge the Permittee the actual costs for obtaining the information.

V. JOINT EXCAVATION

A. Public Entity Excavators. Whenever two or more public entity excavators propose Major Work in the same block within a three-year period, such Work shall be performed by one public entity excavator. The participants to the excavation shall pay their pro rata share of the Work, or as otherwise agreed to by the affected public entities. For purposes of this subsection, the public entity excavators shall be treated as a single Permit Applicant and shall submit one application.

B. Private Entity Excavators. Whenever two or more private entity excavators propose Major Work in the same block within a three-year period, such Work shall be performed by one private entity excavator. For purposes of this subsection, the private entity excavators shall be treated as a single Permit applicant and shall submit one application.

C. Public Entity Excavator and Private Entity Excavator. Whenever a public entity excavator(s) and a private entity excavator(s) propose Major Work in the same block within a three-year period, the Department shall condition Permits for such Work in a manner that maximizes coordination and minimizes the total period of construction.

D. Excavations Not Identified on Major Excavation Plans. When an Applicant seeks a Permit for an Excavation, and such Excavation has not been identified on a major excavation plan so as to allow the City/Town/County to coordinate joint Excavation as set forth in subsections A through C of this section, an Applicant may, in the discretion of the Director, be required to circulate a description of its proposed Excavation to the Permittees and other parties described in Section IV.E above, to determine whether any Persons have requirements for installing Facilities along the proposed route.

1. The Persons notified should be provided with the Applicant's proposed route plan, the target commencement date and the estimated completion date.

2. Within ten (10) working days after the notification required by this subsection, any interested Person must notify the Applicant of their requirements so that the Applicant may incorporate these requirements, where reasonable, in its Permit