

26 **and amended to read:**

27 189.0211 ~~189.056~~ Downtown development districts; ~~ad~~
 28 ~~valorem taxation.~~

29 (1) It is the intent of the Legislature to encourage the
 30 revitalization of downtown areas within large municipalities
 31 where the societal ills associated with urban blight are most
 32 prevalent. However, in recognition of the traditionally broad
 33 home rule power exercised by charter counties, the Legislature
 34 intends that this section apply only to certain counties.

35 (2) As used in this section, the term "downtown
 36 development district" means a special district created for the
 37 purpose of planning, coordinating, and assisting in the
 38 implementation, revitalization, and redevelopment of a specific
 39 downtown area ~~The governing body~~ of a municipality with a
 40 population of more than 400,000, as determined by the Office of
 41 Economic and Demographic Research, and located in a county as
 42 defined in s. 125.011(1).

43 (3) The boundaries of a downtown development district may
 44 only be changed by an ordinance of the governing body of the
 45 municipality conditioned to take effect upon approval by a
 46 majority vote of the qualified electors of the area to be added
 47 to the district voting in a referendum held at a general
 48 election as defined in s. 97.021.

49 (4) A downtown development district may, by ordinance of
 50 the governing body of the municipality that created the

51 district, levy an ad valorem tax of up to 0.475 mill on the
52 taxable value of all real and personal property located in a
53 downtown development district to help finance the operation of
54 the district. The district's millage may not exceed 0.475 mill
55 and may not exceed the limitations contained in s. 200.001(8)(d)
56 for dependent special districts.

57 (5) The annual budget adopted by a downtown development
58 district pursuant to s. 189.016 must identify the specific
59 projects and initiatives to be funded, including estimates,
60 costs, timelines, and the geographic location of each project
61 within the boundaries of the district. Such projects and
62 initiatives must directly benefit properties and businesses
63 located within the boundaries of the district.

64 (6) Administrative and overhead expenditures made by a
65 downtown development district may not exceed 10 percent of such
66 district's total annual budget. For purposes of this subsection,
67 the term "administrative and overhead expenditures" includes
68 salaries and benefits for district employees, professional
69 services, marketing, and consulting expenses.

70 (7) The annual budget of a downtown development district
71 and any amendment thereto must be approved by a majority vote of
72 the governing body of the municipality.

73 **Section 2. Paragraph (h) of subsection (1) of section**
74 **215.971, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

75 215.971 Agreements funded with federal or state

76 assistance.—

77 (1) An agency agreement that provides state financial
 78 assistance to a recipient or subrecipient, as those terms are
 79 defined in s. 215.97, or that provides federal financial
 80 assistance to a subrecipient, as defined by applicable United
 81 States Office of Management and Budget circulars, must include
 82 all of the following:

83 (h) If the agency agreement provides federal or state
 84 financial assistance to a county or municipality that is a rural
 85 community or rural area of opportunity as those terms are
 86 defined in s. 288.0656(2), a special district the geographic
 87 area of which, in whole or in part, is located in such county or
 88 municipality, or an independent special district that provides
 89 water and wastewater services within a rural area of opportunity
 90 as that term is defined in s. 288.0656(2), a provision allowing
 91 the agency to provide for the payment of invoices to the county,
 92 municipality, ~~or~~ rural area of opportunity as that term is
 93 defined in s. 288.0656(2), or special district for verified and
 94 eligible performance that has been completed in accordance with
 95 the terms and conditions set forth in the agreement. This
 96 provision is included to alleviate the financial hardships that
 97 such ~~certain~~ rural counties, and municipalities, or special
 98 districts encounter when administering agreements, ~~and~~ must be
 99 exercised by the agency if ~~when~~ a county, ~~or~~ municipality,
 100 special district the geographic area of which, in whole or in

101 part, is located in such county or municipality, or independent
102 special district that provides water and wastewater services
103 within a rural area of opportunity as that term is defined in s.
104 288.0656(2) demonstrates financial hardship, to the extent that
105 federal or state law, rule, or other regulation allows such
106 payments. This paragraph may not be construed to alter or limit
107 any other provisions of federal or state law, rule, or other
108 regulation.

109 **Section 3. Paragraph (e) of subsection (2) of section**
110 **288.0656, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:**

111 288.0656 Rural Economic Development Initiative.—

112 (2) As used in this section, the term:

113 (e) "Rural community" means:

114 1. A county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.

115 2. A county with a population of 125,000 or fewer which is
116 contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.

117 3. A municipality or special district within a county
118 described in subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.

119 4. An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an
120 incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or fewer and
121 an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or
122 resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as
123 rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress
124 factors identified in paragraph (c) and verified by the
125 department.

126 5. An independent special district that provides water and
127 wastewater services within a rural area of opportunity.

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129 For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined
130 in accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant to
131 s. 186.901.

132 **Section 4.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.