

Rating Action: Moody's upgrades to A3 Wheatlands Metropolitan District, CO's GOULT: stable outlook

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New York, March 03, 2020 -- Moody's Investors Service has upgraded Wheatlands Metropolitan District, CO's general obligation unlimited tax (GOULT) debt rating to A3 from Baa2 affecting approximately \$24.2 million of rated debt. The outlook is stable.

RATINGS RATIONALE

The upgrade to A3 reflects the material growth of the district's tax base, driven by both late-stage residential development and property value appreciation. Growth of full market values is expected to continue given the district's favorable location in the Denver metropolitan area. Additionally, the rating reflects the maintenance of adequate financial reserves, even when considering expected near-term draws for parks and recreation improvements. Finally, the A3 considers the district's above-average, though manageable debt burden, which considers the indirect support of various loan obligations issued by a neighboring parks and recreation authority.

RATING OUTLOOK

The stable outlook reflects the expectation that the district's favorable location near downtown Denver will continue to spur taxable value growth and financial reserves will remain adequate, given the district's limited operational requirements.

FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO AN UPGRADE

- Further expansion of the tax base
- Moderation of the debt burden
- Material increase in operating reserves

FACTORS THAT COULD LEAD TO A DOWNGRADE

- Significant contraction of the tax base
- Material decline in operating reserves, beyond budgeted drawdowns in fiscal 2020
- Substantial increase in debt, absent corresponding taxable value growth

LEGAL SECURITY

The bonds are secured by the full faith and credit of the Wheatlands Metropolitan District, payable via an ad valorem property tax that is not subject to limitation with respect to rate or amount.

PROFILE

The Wheatlands Metropolitan District is located in the City of Aurora (Aaa stable), 20 miles southeast of downtown Denver (Aaa stable). The district was created in order to provide for the funding of general public infrastructure facilitating development of the 419 acres within the district.

METHODOLOGY

The principal methodology used in this rating was US Local Government General Obligation Debt published in September 2019. Please see the Rating Methodologies page on www.moodys.com for a copy of this methodology.

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