

systems, or parts thereof. Whenever such work at any one location involves an estimated outlay of [Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00)], \$10,000.00 or more, plans and specifications therefor shall be prepared by the Chief Sanitary Engineer of the Metropolitan District, and bids for such work shall be invited by reasonable publication in such papers as the Commissioners may designate but said Commissioners shall not be bound to have such work done by contract if it is found after receiving bids therefor that the same can be done at a lower cost by direct employment of the required labor. No water or sewer lines or systems, or any part thereof, shall be constructed except upon the written recommendation of the Chief Sanitary Engineer. Before making his recommendation in writing with respect to the construction or extension of any water or sewer lines or systems, or any parts thereof, the Chief Sanitary Engineer shall make a thorough field inspection of the territory proposed to be served by the new construction or extension, and shall prepare sufficient plans upon which to make an adequate cost estimate of the proposed construction or extension, together with conservative estimates in writing of the revenues to be expected therefrom by assessments and charges of any kind authorized by this Act. Such plans and estimates shall accompany his written recommendations and shall be filed by him in the office of the Commissioners. If said plans and estimates fail to show that the proposed new construction or extension will be financially self-supporting within a reasonable time after completion, the Commissioners shall not order the construction of said new lines or extensions, unless property owners requesting them shall finance their cost upon a basis that will make them a permanently self-supporting part of the Metropolitan District. The requirement that a project be financially self-supporting shall not apply to any exercise by the Commissioners of the general powers and authority to establish, construct and maintain facilities conferred upon them by Section 344, provided the Chief Sanitary Engineer finds that: (a) the cost or expense involved in the exercise of such power and authority is not readily or fairly susceptible of allocation among property owners in the affected area in accordance with the terms of Section 354, and (b) the exercise of such power and authority is for a purpose necessary and useful to the operation or maintenance of a water system, sewer system, or part thereof, constructed or to be constructed in the Baltimore County Metropolitan District, *provided, however, that when an estimated outlay does*