



City Administrator Briefing Report

Mayor

Rhonda Haight

City Council

Angie Arp, Mayor Pro Tempore

Jack Taylor

Christy Kay

Bill Bivins

William Whaley

December 2023

City Administrator Eric M. Soroka

This report is prepared in order to inform the Mayor and City Council of ongoing matters, governmental services activities and the status of major projects.

Downtown Fire

The Blue Ridge Business Association in conjunction with many community leaders is sponsoring a “Garage Sale and Fundraiser” on January 13th in support of the employees and businesses negatively affected by the tragic fire on November 18th. Trackside Station will be closing the lower level of the parking deck to enable the sale of 10’ x 10’ vendor booths for the event in which all proceeds will be donated to the cause. In addition, all parking proceeds for the upper deck on that Saturday will also be donated.

Resolution Adopting Water and Sewer Rate Schedule

As outlined in the 2024 Budget document, in order to support increased operating costs and to address infrastructure improvements and debt service requirements, water and sewer rates were increased by 3.75%. Rates have not increased in four years.

Typical Increase in Monthly Water /Sewer Bill Based on 3,000 gallons/month

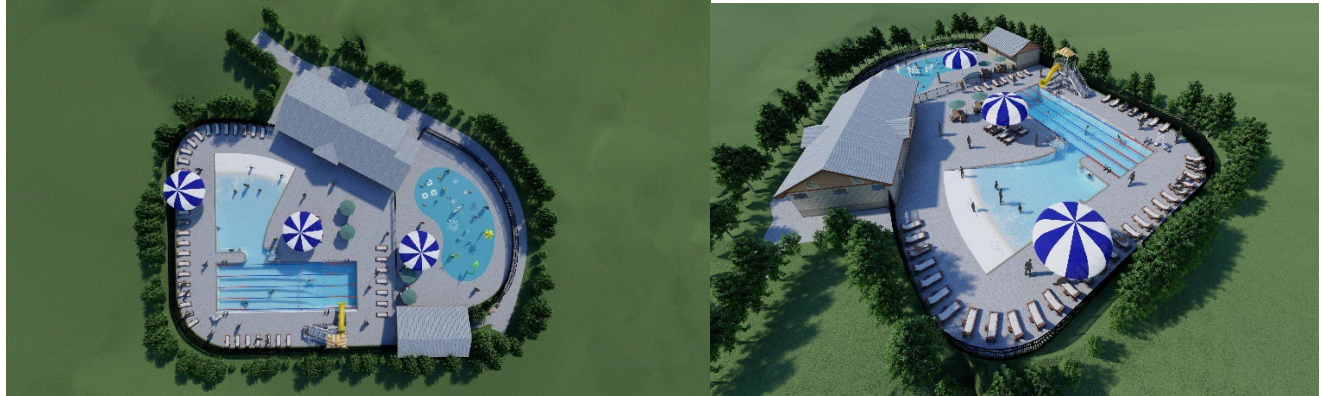
In City		
<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Water \$35	\$37.50	\$2.50
Sewer \$42	\$45.00	\$3.00

Outside City

<u>Current</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Water \$48	\$50.50	\$2.50
Sewer \$47	\$52.50	\$5.50

Intergovernmental Agreement for Blue Ridge City Park between the City and County

The County has awarded the bid to Integrated Properties out of Chattanooga in the amount of \$3,697,000.00. Construction is underway.



New Work Order

The new Citizen Portal that enables citizens to submit work orders from reporting potholes to down trees. This user-friendly system offers a streamlined approach for instant communication and requests directly from citizens to our city departments. Users of the system will be able to track your work orders and receive updates via email. The goal is to expedite the resolution to requests and provide a response as quickly as possible.

Special Events Farmers Market

The following events are scheduled:

- Ice Skating Rink scheduled from November to January

Utility Department Highlights and Infrastructure Improvements

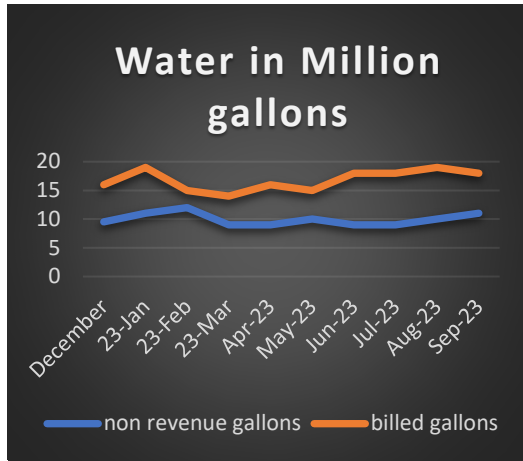
WATER

Finished water	28,528,847
Water sold	<u>17,042,362</u>
Non revenue	11,486,485

(includes flushing, road washing, fire department usage, etc). Water permit average daily use is 80%. Water plant capacity average daily use is 45%.

- The City was awarded a \$1,000,000 grant and the City will provide local match, for a total project of \$2,000,000 to address water loss in Mountain Tops. We are working with engineers to design the rehab to address areas with the most leakage in that subdivision. The project cost is \$2,000,000 to be paid as follows: \$1,000,000 from SFR funds (grant), \$400,000

water surcharge, \$420,000 splost, \$100,000 ARPA (grant), and \$80,000 from water funds. Carter & Sloope, city engineers, has surveyed 100% of the rehab area and we are currently waiting on additional information from OPB on additional grant requirements. A bid date has not been determined yet.



- The pump station rehab at Mountain Tops is currently estimated at \$350,000. This project has been pushed to 2024-2025 so that it doesn't interfere with the water main rehab. The station is approximately 30 years old and needs rehabilitation.

- The crew has started field audits for EPD's new requirement on Service Line Inventory and is 85% complete with City service line identification. A spreadsheet has been configured and data entry for that spreadsheet will start in January 2024. The spreadsheet is part of the EPD requirements for the submittal process. The purpose of the new regulation is to determine if there are any lead pipes in the water system. Currently, Blue Ridge Water does not have

any known lead pipes in the water system. By October 2024 the City will have identified every water main and service line in the system.

- Eagles Nest Booster pump station is over 30 years old. The estimate to rehab is \$300,000 and the City has a GEFA pre-application which was approved at 50% principal forgiveness.
- Hwy 5 GDOT water line relocation. This line relocation is being required by GDOT. Estimated City portion is \$1.6 million. The project is expected to bid in the summer of 2024 (this is handled by GDOT).
- 3 water line leaks were repaired, 0 city side service lines were replaced.
- The crew worked on installing a 2 " main on East First Street, this will be an ongoing project from East Second Street to Porter Road. This will allow the City to abandon an old galvanized line with multiple water leaks.

WASTEWATER

Treated sewer	8,981,000
Billed	<u>8,286,643</u>
I & I	694,357

Sewer permit used is 43%. Sewer plant capacity used is 43%

*Percentages can be affected rain, storm water infiltration or times of heavy; fluctuations are normal

- The design for the sewer lift station upgrades due to aging infrastructure for CVS and Industrial lift stations is complete. The plan to abandon the CVS station has been moved to phase II due to costs. The City will rehab the Industrial station into a bigger station that will handle what previously took two stations. Included in this will be the rerouting of a force main along 515. Carter & Sloope is finishing paperwork for easements and

EPD approvals. The project was bid on September 22, 2023 and the bid award was awarded in October at the cost of \$3,243,362 funded by GEFA.

- The bid for the sewer treatment plant rehab project was awarded to Sol Construction, LLC in the amount of \$4,906,300. Construction is scheduled to start in January 2024.
- 2 sewer leak was repaired.

CUSTOMER BASE – The City has 3,264 active water connections serving 3,499 units, 1188 active sewer connections. We have 3530 meters in the distribution system. The City installed 4 new residential water taps, 0 commercial taps, and 0 new sewer taps. 6 new residential tap applications and 1 new commercial applications were submitted, all were outside the City limits except for 482 Summit St which is a residential application. The City signed up 24 new customers at existing locations, had 35 customers leave existing locations and completed 128 work orders for the month.

New Development Revenues - \$29,242.

Utilities Collection Revenue - \$297,031.

Police Department Statistics & Highlights

The new message board trailer that tracks vehicle speeds has been deployed in various areas of the City to deter speeders.

	October 2023	November 2023
DISPATCHED CALLS FOR SERVICE	598	541
UCR CRIMES REPORTED	24	19
ACCIDENT/INCIDENT/ MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS	37/69	27/79
CITATIONS ISSUED /WARNINGS	75/218 * 13 parking tickets	47/147 * 10 parking tickets
TOP 5 CITATIONS ISSUED	*Speeding *Tag Violations *Hands free violation *Following too close *Failure to obey traffic control device	*DUI *Shoplifting *Tag Violations *Suspended License *Obstruction

Municipal Court

November 2022-November 2023 – Processed 2025 citations from all agencies with fines totaling \$374,721.

November 2023 - Processed 10 parking citations and 148 citations from all agencies with fines totaling \$40,666.

Public Works (Streets & Parks) Department Highlights

- Clean the Depot bathroom Sunday – Saturday.
- Clean the playground bathroom - Sunday – Saturday.
- Maintained Mineral Springs Trail.
- Cleared roads, sidewalks, curb, and gutters from debris in downtown every Friday.
- Repaired and replaced damaged storm drains.
- Cleared numerous drainage ditches in various sections of the City before and during heavy rain.
- Repaired various pothole and utility repairs throughout the City.
- City Parking Lot revenue to November 2023: \$ 161,703.
- Worked with paving contract to prepare areas for milling and resurfacing.
- Replaced signs and installed new signs.
- Worked with the contractor to have the Christmas Lights in the downtown area installed.
- Participated in the “Light Up Blue Ridge” parade.

City’s 2023 Roads and Sidewalk Improvements

The City Council awarded the bid to Johnson Paving, at the low bid price of \$1,101,558.12. The following improvements are complete:

Sidewalks:

1. Mountain Street (Roberts Way to Old Hwy 76)
2. Depot Street (E. Main St. to Old Hwy 76)
3. W. Main Street (In Front of Fire Dept)
4. E. Main Street (Church St. to past Hall St.)
5. Church Street (Old Hwy 76 to E. 2nd St.)
6. Summit Street (W. 1st St. to W. Main St.)

Streets:

1. Depot Street (Old Hwy 76 to W. 1st St.)
2. W. Main Street (Church St. to N of Depot St.)
3. Industrial Park Dr. (Ada St. to Windy Ridge)
4. McKinney Street (W. 1st St. to Old Hwy 76)

The portion of E. 1st Street (E. 2nd St. to 76 Conn) is delayed to complete utility work in the area. Tentatively scheduled for early January.

City’s 2024 Roads and Sidewalk Improvements

The proposed schedule for 2024 will be presented to the City Council at the January Meeting.

Downtown Drainage Project Update

Railroad Crossing Portion- The contractor (Wilson Construction Management) has completed the culvert replacement/upgrade (24” to 60”) under the railroad tracks. This portion of the project has been inspected and approved.

The City completed the process of obtaining the main easement for the planned drainage work. Bids were received and opened for the above subject project. A total of four (4) responsive

bids were received. North Georgia Concrete, Inc. out of Dahlonega, Georgia with a base bid of \$3,892,362.38 was determined to be the low bidder.

This is a major drainage project that has been put off for years. The City Engineer indicates that this project was in the works in 2017. Obviously, delaying this project has driven up the cost. Also, dividing the project in phases will not solve the drainage issues in the short term and could result in even higher costs.

The proposed 2024 budget contains \$1,900,000 for this project. We are exploring utilizing a loan from GEFA to fund the shortfall of \$2,000,000. Once GEFA determines if we are eligible, the project will be presented to the City Council to award the bid and begin construction.

Mineral Springs Road Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation

Complete.

Downtown Restroom Facility Project

Due to the cost of the original project bids, we are working with the Architect to redesign the building to a one-story building that only includes restrooms. The goal is to begin construction in January when the train is not in service.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT & APPLICATIONS IN PROGRESS

Applicant	Project	Address	Application	Description	Status \Expiration date
GWG INVESTMENTS	LAND DISTURBANCE	0052-109A & 0052-110-01 SCENIC DRIVE	RENEWED PERMIT:2022-841	GRADING 2 COMMERCIAL LOTS AND STORMWATER PLANS	IN PROCESS 11-19-2023
FANNIN COMMISSIONERS	LAND DISTURBANCE	BR02-221 & BR02-222 134 CHURCH STREET	PERMIT:2023-865	PARKING LOT	IN PROCESS 2-15-2024
BUILDING OF BLUE RIDGE LLC	REMODEL	BR02-124B 544 EAST MAIN STREET	PERMIT:2023-885	REMODEL FOR A APARTMENT	IN PROCESS 3-28-2024
ROGER WATSON	DEMO PERMIT	BR02-005 524 EAST SECOND ST	PERMIT:2023-887	DEMO OLD BLOCK BUILDING	IN PROCESS 3/29/2024
GRUMPY OLD MEN	REMODEL	BR03-022 1315 EAST MAIN STREET	PERMIT:2023-897	REMODELING RESTROOMS ONLY	IN PROCESS 6/7/2024
BBSI	REMODEL	BR02-098 631 EAST MAIN STREET	PERMIT:2023-898	REMODEL MAIN ENTRANCE OF BUILDING	IN PROCESS 6/8/2024
NEW HORIZON HOMES	DEMO PERMIT CONSTRUCTION PERMIT	BR02-063 951 EAST MAIN STREET	PERMIT:2023-899	DEMO GARAGE CONSTRUCT NEW GARAGE REMODEL KITCHEN AND BATHROOMS	IN PROCESS 6/8/2024
FERRO BUILDING COMPANY	BUILD DUPLEX	BR06-101 202 EAST SECOND STREET	PERMIT:2023-867	BUILD DUPLEX WITH DRIVEWAY	IN PROCESS 6/21/2024
NADEEM-TAYYAB	REZONE	BR01-031E JOSH HALL ROAD	PERMIT:2023-901	REZONE FROM M1-C2	IN PROCESS 6/21/2024
SUBHA CORPORATION	REZONE	BR01-031F 4500 APPALACHIAN HWY	PERMIT:2023-900	REZONE FROM M1-C2	IN PROCESS 6/21/2024
MARK SIMS	CONSTRUCTION PERMIT	BR02-039 MCKINNEY STREET	PERMIT:2023-902	BUILD PRIMARY RESIDENCE	IN PROCESS 6/23/2024
BLUE RIDGE CITY STORAGE	CONSTRUCTION PERMIT	BR04-010 83 INDUSTRIAL BLVD	PERMIT:2023-904	ENCLOSE BUILDING BY INSTALLING ROLL UP DOOR	IN PROCESS 7/6/2024
ATLANTA GAS LIGHT	CONSTRUCTION PERMIT	BR01-089 11 MOUNTAIN STREET	PERMIT:2023-905	INSTALLING A NEW 2" GAS MAIN AT SE CORNER OF W FIRST ST AND DOWN RIVER ST	IN PROCESS 7/21/2024

WINDY RIDGE CONOCO	CONSTRUCTION PERMIT	0045-040-BC 4900 APPALACHIAN HWY	PERMIT:2023-906	INSTALL VENT HOOD WITH FIRE SUPPRESSION	IN PROCESS 7/24/2024
PATRICK HOGAN	REPLACE OF MOBILE HOME	BR05-102 564 SUMMIT STREET	PERMIT:2023-908	REMOVAL OF A 1975 SINGLE WIDE AND REPLACE WITH NEW ONE	IN PROCESS 8/11/2024
GEORGIA MOUNTAIN HEALTH SERVICES	COMMERCIAL	0052-104C 165 BLUE RIDGE OVERLOOK	PERMIT 2023-917	NEW CONSTRUCTION OF ADMINISTRATION BUILDING	IN PROCESS 12/20/24

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
11/01/2023 To 11/30/2023

CITY OF BLUE RIDGE
FY 2023

*100 in the % Used column indicates that no budget exists

	Current Period (\$)	YTD (\$)	Budget (\$)	% Used
100 General Fund				
Revenue				
31 Taxes Subtotal	\$315,087.20	\$3,235,560.33	\$2,999,500.00	108
32 Licenses & Permits Subtotal	\$55,150.00	\$260,787.00	\$152,500.00	171
33 Intergovernmental Revenue Subtotal	\$6,762.76	\$45,154.19	\$3,000.00	1,505
34 Charges For Services Subtotal	\$5,461.00	\$181,028.81	\$121,150.00	149
35 Fines & Forfeitures Subtotal	\$23,847.00	\$222,574.71	\$200,000.00	111
36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$91,014.26	\$4,000.00	2,275
37 Contributions & Donations Subtotal	\$0.00	\$319.19	\$0.00	*100
38 Miscellaneous Revenue Subtotal	\$1,339.91	\$70,659.91	\$79,000.00	89
39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$8,521.00	\$1,231,558.00	1
Revenue Subtotal	\$407,647.87	\$4,115,619.40	\$4,790,708.00	86
Expenditure				
1100 Mayor & Council Subtotal	\$3,470.34	\$130,182.52	\$171,880.00	76
1300 Executive Subtotal	\$29,837.38	\$210,562.01	\$218,733.00	96
1400 Elections Subtotal	\$13,913.25	\$52,315.12	\$15,500.00	338
1500 General Administration Subtotal	\$22,107.48	\$189,667.43	\$201,522.00	94
2650 Municipal Court Subtotal	\$23,026.17	\$172,299.84	\$169,575.00	102
3200 Police Subtotal	\$122,245.50	\$1,179,952.72	\$1,383,728.00	85
3520 Fire Fighting Subtotal	\$1,050.00	\$20,913.02	\$27,000.00	77
4200 Highways & Streets Subtotal	\$52,882.69	\$678,502.12	\$1,311,245.00	52
4900 Maintenance & Shop Subtotal	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$0.00	*100
6210 Parks Administration Subtotal	\$0.00	\$431.71	\$0.00	*100
6220 Park Areas Subtotal	\$30,716.12	\$364,602.02	\$1,193,721.00	31
7400 Planning And Zoning Subtotal	\$8,055.68	\$92,461.07	\$97,806.00	95
Expenditure Subtotal	\$307,604.61	\$3,092,189.58	\$4,790,710.00	65
Before Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$100,043.26	\$1,023,429.82	-\$2.00 171,491
After Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$100,043.26	\$1,023,429.82	-\$2.00 171,491
210 Confiscated Assets				
Revenue				
35 Fines & Forfeitures Subtotal	\$0.00	\$2,548.66	\$1,500.00	170
38 Miscellaneous Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$12.00	\$0.00	*100
39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$36.28	\$0.00	*100
Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$2,596.94	\$1,500.00	173
Expenditure				
3200 Police Subtotal	\$0.00	\$51.28	\$1,500.00	3

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
 11/01/2023 To 11/30/2023

CITY OF BLUE RIDGE
 FY 2023

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		Current Period (\$)	YTD (\$)	Budget (\$)	% Used
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$0.00	\$51.28	\$1,500.00	3
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$2,545.66	\$0.00	*100
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$2,545.66	\$0.00	*100
230 American Rescue Plan (Arp)					
Revenue					
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1,430.38	\$0.00	*100
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	0
	Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1,430.38	\$300,000.00	0
Expenditure					
	0000 Revenues Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	0
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	0
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1,430.38	\$0.00	*100
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1,430.38	\$0.00	*100
275 Hotel/Motel Fund					
Revenue					
	31 Taxes Subtotal	\$122,757.49	\$775,580.33	\$625,000.00	124
	Revenue Subtotal	\$122,757.49	\$775,580.33	\$625,000.00	124
Expenditure					
	7540 Tourism Subtotal	\$1,252.85	\$421,707.30	\$760,099.00	55
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$1,252.85	\$421,707.30	\$760,099.00	55
Before Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$121,504.64	\$353,873.03	-\$135,099.00	-262
Other Financing Source					
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$135,099.00	0
	Other Financing Source Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$135,099.00	0
After Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$121,504.64	\$353,873.03	\$0.00	*100
320 2018 Splost					
Revenue					
	33 Intergovernmental Revenue Subtotal	\$61,789.51	\$656,014.45	\$718,820.00	91
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$33,848.79	\$1,000.00	3,385
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,249,000.00	0
	Revenue Subtotal	\$61,789.51	\$689,863.24	\$1,968,820.00	35
Expenditure					
	1500 General Administration Subtotal	\$0.00	\$15,987.06	\$0.00	*100
	4200 Highways & Streets Subtotal	\$400,000.00	\$571,906.25	\$1,548,820.00	37
	4440 Water Distribution Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$420,000.00	0
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$400,000.00	\$587,893.31	\$1,968,820.00	30
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$338,210.49	\$101,969.93	\$0.00	*100

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
 11/01/2023 To 11/30/2023

CITY OF BLUE RIDGE
 FY 2023

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		Current Period (\$)	YTD (\$)	Budget (\$)	% Used
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$338,210.49	\$101,969.93	\$0.00	*100
505 Blue Ridge Water/Sewer Fund					
Revenue					
	33 Intergovernmental Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000,000.00	0
	34 Charges For Services Subtotal	\$413,295.17	\$4,148,422.82	\$4,342,000.00	96
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$36,186.76	\$3,000.00	1,206
	38 Miscellaneous Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$5,819.00	\$0.00	*100
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$135,535.90	\$6,273,955.00	2
	Revenue Subtotal	\$413,295.17	\$4,325,964.48	\$11,618,955.00	37
Expenditure					
	4310 Sanitary Administration Subtotal	\$9,721.21	\$175,302.32	\$174,548.00	100
	4331 Sanitary Sewer Maintenananc Subtotal	\$32,402.42	\$626,639.68	\$2,509,119.00	25
	4335 Sewage Treatment Plant Subtotal	\$29,181.68	\$564,153.03	\$3,640,004.00	15
	4410 Water Administration Subtotal	\$24,856.83	\$821,092.29	\$918,384.00	89
	4430 Water Treatment Subtotal	\$46,823.60	\$593,101.78	\$715,657.00	83
	4440 Water Distribution Subtotal	\$66,800.19	\$1,045,171.67	\$3,661,243.00	29
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$209,785.93	\$3,825,460.77	\$11,618,955.00	33
Before Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$203,509.24	\$500,503.71	\$0.00	*100
After Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$203,509.24	\$500,503.71	\$0.00	*100
800 Downtown Development Authority					
Revenue					
	33 Intergovernmental Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$53,424.28	\$78,125.00	68
	Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$53,424.28	\$78,125.00	68
Revenue					
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150,000.00	0
		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$150,000.00	0
Expenditure					
	7540 Tourism Subtotal	\$0.00	\$7,712.70	\$100,000.00	8
	7550 Downtown Dev Auth Subtotal	\$0.00	\$28,073.17	\$128,125.00	22
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$0.00	\$35,785.87	\$228,125.00	16
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$17,638.41	-\$300,000.00	-6
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$17,638.41	-\$300,000.00	-6