



City Administrator Briefing Report

Mayor

Rhonda Haight

City Council

Angie Arp, Mayor Pro Tempore

Jack Taylor

Christy Kay

Bill Bivins

William Whaley

September 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.

Ordinance Establishing Ad Valorem Rate for FY2023

Heard on first reading at the September Council Meeting. The Tax Digest submitted by the County Property Appraiser slightly increased from \$193,234,978 in 2022 to \$193,361,278 in 2023. This represents an increase of \$126,300. However, based on the tax digest prepared by the county, there was a reduction of \$2,543,576 caused by reassessments, the clean-up of the tax rolls by removing properties that were in the county or personal property for establishments no longer in business. This resulted in a slightly higher rollback tax rate of 4.106 compared to last year's rate of \$4.050. This will generate \$762,000 in revenue for the City, compared to \$751,000 in the budget for FY2023.

Preparation of 2024 Budget

In Process. The preparation of the 2024 proposed budget document is underway and will be presented to the City Council in November.

2023 City Council Elections

Pursuant to the City Charter and Georgia law the following persons have been qualified by the City Clerk:

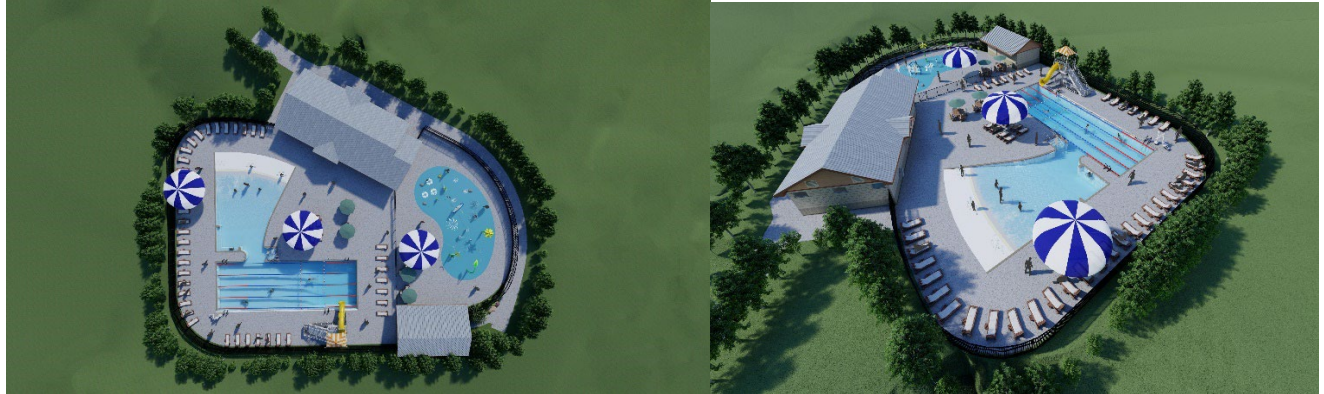
Post 1 Michael Peters and Jack Taylor (Incumbent)

Post 3 Christy Kay (Incumbent)

Post 5 Bill Bivins (Incumbent)

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/Purchase Order System

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:

- Monthly Community Yard Sales
- Jazz Band 9/30
- Film Festival 10/6
- Ice Skating Rink scheduled from November to January
- Light Up Blue Ridge

City Special Events



Next Movie Night in the Downtown Park – September 23

Downtown Special Events

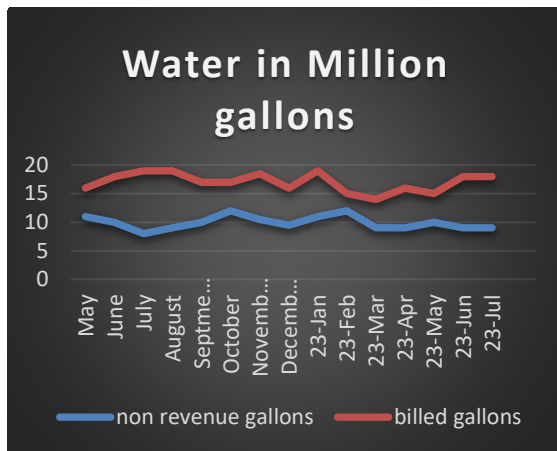
Fall Arts in the Park – 10/14-10/15

Utility Department Highlights and Infrastructure Improvements

WATER

Finished water	28,736,228
Water sold	18,813,572
Non revenue	9,922,656

(includes flushing, road washing, fire department usage, etc). Water permit average daily use is 76%. Water plant capacity average daily use is 43%. Percentages can be affected by main leaks or times of heavy tourism; fluctuations are normal.



- 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.

- 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. The purpose of the new regulation is to determine if there is any lead pipe in the water system. Currently there is no known lead pipe. By October 2024 the City will have identified every water main and service line in the system.
- 9 water line leaks were repaired and 8 city side service lines were replaced. 1 fire hydrant was replaced.

WASTEWATER

Treated sewer	11,478,000
Billed	8,635,909
I & I	2,842,091

Sewer permit used is 45%. Sewer plant capacity used is 45%

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

- The City is continuing repair of known I & I issues. Recent video work was done which revealed I & I along sewer mains on East Main Street, Depot St and East First St. We are working on a plan to address these areas.

- The design for the sewer lift station upgrades due to aging infrastructure for CVS and Industrial lift stations is complete. The City will abandon the CVS station and 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 is set to bid on September 22, 2023 and the estimated cost is \$3,500,000 funded by GEFA.
- The bid for the sewer treatment plant rehab project was awarded this month to Sol Construction, LLC in the amount of \$4,906,300.
- 1 sewer leak was repaired.

CUSTOMER BASE – The City has 3,242 active water connections serving 3,482 units, 1176 active sewer connections. We have 3503 meters in the distribution system. The City installed 4 new residential water taps and 0 new sewer taps. 5 new residential tap applications were submitted, none of these were in the City. The City signed up 32 new customers at existing locations, had 39 customers leave existing locations and completed 215 work orders for the month.

New Development Revenues - \$8,904.

Utilities Collection Revenue - \$370,422.

Police Department Statistics & Highlights

The upgrade to Microsoft tablets in all the patrol vehicles was completed. This will provide more capabilities and updated software for the officers to do their job.

	July 2023	August 2023
DISPATCHED CALLS FOR SERVICE	536	719
UCR CRIMES REPORTED	33	28
ACCIDENT/INCIDENT/ MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS	36/88	40/154
CITATIONS ISSUED /WARNINGS	54/136 *8 parking tickets	83/255 * 2 parking tickets
TOP 5 CITATIONS ISSUED	*Tag violations *Speeding *Shoplifting *Public Drunk *No Insurance	*Tag violations *Poss. Of marijuana < 1oz *No Insurance *Headlight/Light violations *Driving w/ Suspended License

Municipal Court

August 2022-August 2023 – Processed 1853 citations from all agencies with fines totaling \$340,653.

August 2023 - Processed 2 parking citations and 158 citations from all agencies with fines totaling \$36,957.

Public Works (Streets & Parks) Department Highlights

- Clean the Depot bathroom Sunday – Saturday.
- Clean the playground bathroom - Sunday – Saturday.
- Maintained Mineral Springs Trail. Replaced wooden planks on bridge that were in disrepair.
- 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 August 2023: \$ 131,111.96.
- 80% complete with downtown planter beautification project.
- Replaced mulch in and around the area of the Downtown Playground Park.
- A movable solar powered speed feedback sign was installed on Ada Street to deter speeders.

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. Work commenced this month. Advance notice is being provided to the community where work would interfere with traffic flow or closed streets. A large portion of the road pavement that will be milled and sidewalks that will be replaced will be recycled by Johnson Paving to be used on other projects. The following areas are included in the bid:

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

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. This project is out to be bid and is to be opened on November 2, 2023.

Mineral Springs Road Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation

Complete.

Downtown Restroom Facility Project

The apparent low bidder is Benning Construction Company. The bid amount is more than the original budget. Georgia Local Government Public Works Construction Law states that the contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder whose bid meets the requirements and criteria set forth in the invitation for bids; provided, however, that if the bid from the lowest responsible and responsive bidder exceeds the funds budgeted for the public works construction contract, the governmental entity may negotiate with such apparent low bidder to obtain a contract price within the budgeted amount. Such negotiations may include changes in the scope of work and other bid requirements. This process is also called value engineering, whereby the architects and structural designer meet with the contractor to determine options and alternatives to produce cost saving, while maintaining the integrity of project. We have been meeting with the contractor to determine what building items can be reworked to produce cost savings. This process should be completed shortly. Additional funding for this project is available in the Downtown Development Authority Fund and Hotel/Hotel Fund.

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 AND ENCLOSURE ADDITION TO REAR SLAB OF BUILDING	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 COMPAN	BUILD DUPLEX	BR06-101 202 EAST SECOND STREET	PERMIT:2023-867	BUILD DUPLEX WITH DRIVEWAY	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

KIZUNA	REMODEL	BR01-140 140 PROGRESS CIRCLE STE 2	PERMIT:2023-911	REMODELING EMPTY PARCEL NEIGHBORING EXISTING RESTAURANT	IN PROCESS 8/18/2023
MARIE HERNDON	DEMO HOUSE	BR01-001 85 MESSER LOOP	PERMIT:2023-913	DEMO HOUSE DOWN	IN PROCESS 8/25/2024
BLUE RIDGE CITY PARK	BUILD POOL	BR05-006 350 GRAY STREET	PERMIT:2023-914	BUILD NEW POOL AND SPLASH PAD	IN PROCESS 08/28/2024
JONES ST APARTMENTS	FENCES	BR05-007 125 JONES ST	PERMIT:2023-915	FENCE SIDE&BACK FENCE ON TOP OF RETAINING WALL	IN PROCESS 08/28/2024
DAVID HAIGHT	LAND DISTURBANCE	BR05-003 MINERAL SPRINGS ST &JONES ST	PERMIT:2023-762	RENEWAL OF LAND DISTURBANCE PERMIT	IN PROCESS 09/06/2024
JACK TAYLOR	CONSTRUCTION PERMIT	BR02-246 504 WEST SECOND STREET	PERMIT:2023-886	ADDING ROOF TO DECK AND EXPANSION OF DECK	IN PROCESS 09/08/2024

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

08/01/2023 To 08/31/2023

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	\$217,302.33	\$2,411,573.99	\$2,999,500.00	80
32 Licenses & Permits Subtotal	\$1,425.00	\$173,037.00	\$152,500.00	113
33 Intergovernmental Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$38,391.43	\$3,000.00	1,280
34 Charges For Services Subtotal	\$20,357.73	\$142,611.86	\$121,150.00	118
35 Fines & Forfeitures Subtotal	\$17,108.00	\$164,337.71	\$200,000.00	82
36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$89,691.85	\$4,000.00	2,242
37 Contributions & Donations Subtotal	\$0.00	\$319.19	\$0.00	*100
38 Miscellaneous Revenue Subtotal	\$2,491.88	\$46,963.16	\$79,000.00	59
39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$8,521.00	\$1,231,558.00	1
Revenue Subtotal	\$258,684.94	\$3,075,447.19	\$4,790,708.00	64
Expenditure				
1100 Mayor & Council Subtotal	\$11,117.95	\$104,089.42	\$171,880.00	61
1300 Executive Subtotal	\$19,167.62	\$151,736.99	\$218,733.00	69
1400 Elections Subtotal	\$31,113.22	\$34,184.58	\$15,500.00	221
1500 General Administration Subtotal	\$22,948.94	\$144,205.91	\$201,522.00	72
2650 Municipal Court Subtotal	\$15,779.36	\$125,300.24	\$169,575.00	74
3200 Police Subtotal	\$101,464.52	\$875,387.47	\$1,383,728.00	63
3520 Fire Fighting Subtotal	\$1,180.00	\$17,070.72	\$27,000.00	63
4200 Highways & Streets Subtotal	\$66,723.77	\$513,276.16	\$1,311,245.00	39
6220 Park Areas Subtotal	\$30,570.05	\$280,999.14	\$1,193,721.00	24
7400 Planning And Zoning Subtotal	\$6,609.78	\$69,278.95	\$97,806.00	71
Expenditure Subtotal	\$306,675.21	\$2,315,529.58	\$4,790,710.00	48
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$47,990.27	\$759,917.61	-\$2.00 ,995,881
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$47,990.27	\$759,917.61	-\$2.00 ,995,881
210 Confiscated Assets				
Revenue				
35 Fines & Forfeitures Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	0
Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	0
Expenditure				
3200 Police Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	0
Expenditure Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	0
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0
230 American Rescue Plan (Arp)				

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

08/01/2023 To 08/31/2023

CITY OF BLUE RIDGE

FY 2023

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		Current Period (\$)	YTD (\$)	Budget (\$)	% Used	
Revenue						
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$737.39	\$0.00	*100	
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$300,000.00	0	
	Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$737.39	\$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	\$737.39	\$0.00	*100
	After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$737.39	\$0.00	*100
275 Hotel/Motel Fund						
Revenue						
	31 Taxes Subtotal	\$82,858.41	\$510,252.64	\$625,000.00	82	
	Revenue Subtotal	\$82,858.41	\$510,252.64	\$625,000.00	82	
Expenditure						
	7540 Tourism Subtotal	\$1,218.57	\$296,158.36	\$760,099.00	39	
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$1,218.57	\$296,158.36	\$760,099.00	39	
	Before Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$81,639.84	\$214,094.28	-\$135,099.00	-158
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	\$81,639.84	\$214,094.28	\$0.00	*100
320 City Of Blue Ridge Splost						
Revenue						
	33 Intergovernmental Revenue Subtotal	\$62,997.77	\$465,155.14	\$718,820.00	65	
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$14,013.50	\$1,000.00	1,401	
	39 Other Financing Sources Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,249,000.00	0	
	Revenue Subtotal	\$62,997.77	\$479,168.64	\$1,968,820.00	24	
Expenditure						
	1500 General Administration Subtotal	\$0.00	\$15,987.06	\$0.00	*100	
	4200 Highways & Streets Subtotal	\$146,500.00	\$162,963.75	\$1,548,820.00	11	
	4440 Water Distribution Subtotal	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$420,000.00	0	
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$146,500.00	\$178,950.81	\$1,968,820.00	9	
	Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$83,502.23	\$300,217.83	\$0.00	*100
	After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$83,502.23	\$300,217.83	\$0.00	*100
340 Multiple Grant Fund						
Revenue						
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1.51	\$0.00	*100	

REVENUE & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

08/01/2023 To 08/31/2023

CITY OF BLUE RIDGE

FY 2023

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		Current Period (\$)	YTD (\$)	Budget (\$)	% Used
	Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1.51	\$0.00	*100
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	\$0.00	\$1.51	\$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	\$371,272.17	\$2,946,747.90	\$4,342,000.00	68
	36 Investment Income Subtotal	\$0.00	\$19,672.53	\$3,000.00	656
	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	\$371,272.17	\$3,107,775.33	\$11,618,955.00	27
Expenditure					
	4310 Sanitary Administration Subtotal	\$13,233.05	\$150,022.83	\$174,548.00	86
	4331 Sanitary Sewer Maintenanc Subtotal	\$23,714.71	\$520,128.92	\$2,509,119.00	21
	4335 Sewage Treatment Plant Subtotal	\$62,681.10	\$428,389.59	\$3,640,004.00	12
	4410 Water Administration Subtotal	\$30,924.66	\$755,457.38	\$918,384.00	82
	4430 Water Treatment Subtotal	\$55,029.95	\$446,484.68	\$715,657.00	62
	4440 Water Distribution Subtotal	\$68,831.89	\$794,157.96	\$3,661,243.00	22
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$254,415.36	\$3,094,641.36	\$11,618,955.00	27
Before Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$116,856.81	\$13,133.97	\$0.00	*100
After Transfers	Excess Of Revenue Subtotal	\$116,856.81	\$13,133.97	\$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	\$7,712.70	\$7,712.70	\$100,000.00	8
	7550 Downtown Dev Auth Subtotal	\$1,875.00	\$20,651.30	\$128,125.00	16
	Expenditure Subtotal	\$9,587.70	\$28,364.00	\$228,125.00	12
Before Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$9,587.70	\$25,060.28	-\$300,000.00	-8
After Transfers	Deficiency Of Revenue Subtotal	-\$9,587.70	\$25,060.28	-\$300,000.00	-8