

**REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA  
DECEMBER 12, 2017  
TUESDAY AT 10:00 AM  
CBC (OLD LODGE), 696 SKY VALLEY WAY**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**  
October 17, 2017-Council Work Session -2018 Budget  
October 24, 2017- Public Hearing- 2018 Budget  
November 14, 2017- Regular Council Meeting
- 4. Adoption of Agenda**

**SPECIAL GUEST**

- 5. Presentation by Engineering Management Incorporated– Sanitary Sewer Feasibility Study for City of Sky Valley**
- 6. Mayor’s Remarks**
- 7. Council Remarks**
- 8. City Manager & Department Reports – Exceptions and Questions**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- 9. Public Hearing for Tree Ordinance**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 10. Consider Tree Ordinance – Planning and Zoning Recommendation to Council**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11. Public Forum and General Comments**
- 12. Adjournment**

**MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL WORK SESSION, CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA HELD ON  
OCTOBER 17, 2017, TUESDAY AT 9:00 AM, CBC (OLD LODGE), 696 SKY VALLEY WAY**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Goodgame, Council President Lively, Councilors Durpo, Larsen, Lively, MacNair and Steil

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Lapeyrouse, City Clerk Fast and Police Chief Estes

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Goodgame called the meeting to order.

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

Councilor Lively made a motion to adopt the agenda. Councilor Steil seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**3. PROPOSED DRAFT BUDGET FOR 2018**

City Manager Lapeyrouse went through each department of the budget and explained the changes (if any) for each department.

The 2018 Budget is based on the rollback rate of 16.110 mils

'Roll-back rate' means the previous year's millage rate minus the millage equivalent of the total net assessed value added by reassessments

Overall, the Operating Expenditures for the General Fund are up approximately \$7,000 and Capital Expenditures are down \$374,800.

**Revenue summary:**

Anticipated revenues are expected to net nearly \$10,000 over 2017 mostly due to an increase in our LMIG money to be received from GDOT (if there is a resolution between the County and Clayton) and \$10,000 in Motor Vehicle Tax revenue.

Local Grants are expected to be lower than 2017 due to the police grant for computers in the vehicles received this year.

Reimbursement of damaged property is not planned to be a revenue source for 2018, and would only be amended if damages were to happen.

**Expenditure summary:**

Legislative, Executive and Election Departments remain constant.

Administration expenditures are anticipated to increase by approximately \$10,000 mostly due to rising health insurance costs.

Buildings and Grounds and Judicial Departments remain constant.

Police expenditures are expected to decrease by approximately \$16,000 due mostly to the computer grant and the repair of the police vehicle damages which are not a part of the 2018 budget. Health Insurance is anticipated to increase.

Fire remains constant with 1 mil dedicated to the Fire Department

Road expenditures are expected to decrease by approximately \$169,000 due to a decrease in road paving. Seasonal help was increased as well as general supplies and capital outlay

for machinery. Road striping equipment and/or other right-of-way trimming equipment will be considered during 2018.

Special Activities/Events remain constant

Parks will have a newly established budget of \$5,750. No capital outlay expenditures have been identified at this time. Unspent capital outlay at the end of 2017 for the park can be reserved by Council for future improvements or it will go back to unreserved fund balance. Housing & Development remains constant less the purchase of the vehicle bought in 2017. Economic Development remains constant

Depreciation is being funded at \$17,849 of the total \$63,307 in the General Fund

Water Fund and Solid Waste Fund Budget's remain constant with no planned capital expenditures.

Water Depreciation is being funded at \$41,910 of the total \$175,292.

Solid Waste Depreciation is being funded fully at \$11,600.

The Budget provides for Payroll for the General Fund, Water and Solid Waste including 13 Full-time employees, 1 Regular Part-Time employee, 4 Seasonal employees and Temporary employees as necessary.

Proposed payroll includes a 3% increase for the 14 regular full time/part time employees in the total aggregate amount of \$15,005. CPI for Atlanta, GA is 3.5%. It also increases seasonal employees by two at \$10/hr from May through October

No proposed changes were suggested by Council to the budget.

There will be a public hearing following the council meeting on 10-24-2017 at 10 AM.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Lively made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Durpo seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

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Ella Fast, City Clerk

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON OCTOBER 24, 2017, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 10:00 A.M. COUNCIL MEETING- THE MEETING BEGAN AT 11:12 AM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mayor Goodgame, Councilors Durpo, Larsen, MacNair and Steil  
**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Lapeyrouse, City Clerk Fast and Police Chief Estes

Mayor Goodgame presented the following information.

The purpose of this public hearing is to receive public comments on the proposed 2018 budget. No additional public hearings are scheduled. The budget will be on the agenda to be adopted at a Regular Council Meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 A.M.

**GENERAL FUND**

- In opposition to
- In favor of

City Manager Lapeyrouse gave a summary of the General Fund Budget.

No comments were made in opposition to or in favor of.

**WATER FUND**

- In opposition to
- In favor of

City Manager Lapeyrouse gave a summary of the Water Fund Budget.

No comments were made in opposition to or in favor of.

**SOLID WASTE FUND**

- In opposition to
- In favor of

City Manager Lapeyrouse gave a summary of the Solid Waste Fund Budget.

No comments were made in opposition to or in favor of.

**HOTEL/MOTEL FUND**

- In opposition to
- In favor of

City Manager Lapeyrouse gave a summary of the Hotel/Motel Fund Budget.

No comments were made in opposition to or in favor of.

There being no further business to come before the Mayor and Council, the Public Hearing ended at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

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Ella Fast, City Clerk

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING, CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA HELD ON NOVEMBER 14, 2017, TUESDAY AT 10:00 AM, CBC (OLD LODGE), 696 SKY VALLEY WAY**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Council President Lively, Councilors Durpo, Larsen, Lively, MacNair and Steil

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mayor Goodgame

**STAFF PRESENT:** City Manager Lapeyrouse, City Clerk Fast and Police Chief Estes

**1. Call to Order**

Council President Lively called the meeting to order.

**2. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance**

Lynn Becker gave the invocation and Council President Lively led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

October 24, 2017-Regular Council Meeting- Councilor Steil made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor Larsen seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

November 7, 2017- Special Called Council Meeting- Councilor Durpo made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilor MacNair seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

**4. Adoption of Agenda**

Councilor Larsen made a motion to approve the adoption of the agenda. Councilor Steil seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

**5. Mayor's Remarks**

Council President Lively congratulated Robert MacNair, Neil Howard, Paul Wheeler & Al Piontkowski on the election.

**6. Council Remarks**

MacNair- Thanked everyone that voted. It is a great feeling winning. Going to try to do everything they said they would do in time.

Durpo- Congratulations to all.

Steil- wished everyone Happy Thanksgiving.

Larsen- Good Morning everyone and introduced Bob Biermann the new pastor at the Sky Valley Chapel. She also hoped everyone had a Blessed Thanksgiving.

**7. City Manager & Department Reports – Exceptions and Questions**

City Manager Lapeyrouse presented the monthly reports.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**8. Bridge to connect Walking Path**

Clarence Redden presented options for the railing.

Councilor Steil made a motion to approve revised bid of Clarence Redden for \$15,450. Councilor Larsen seconded the motion. Councilors Steil, Larsen & Lively voted yes and Councilors Durpo & MacNair voted no- motion passed 3/2.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**9. Consider Resolution for the adoption of FY 2018 Budget**

Councilor Steil made a motion to approve Resolution for the adoption of the FY 2018 Budget.

Councilor Lively seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

**10. Alpine Drive – Request to return to two-way traffic**

Councilor Steil made a motion to approve two-way traffic on Alpine and the motion died from lack of second.

Councilor Larsen made a motion to not make it two-way and to analyze the situation by the City pursuant to civil engineering professionals. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn by Councilor Larsen.

Councilor Steil made a motion to leave it one-way until we can have gravel placed along the ditch on the up-hill side. Councilor Durpo seconded and passed unanimously. City Manager Lapeyrouse stated that if Council wanted the same material as was used on the shoulders in the road paving project, she will contact the outside contractor for pricing and advise.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**11. Public Forum and General Comments**

Susie Piontkowski inquired about the bleachers at the park – Lapeyrouse responded, it is shown as an expenditure in the Parks Department.

Neil Howard- requested to update sound system.

Milt Gillespie- thanked the outgoing Council that he appreciated their service.

**12. Adjournment**

Councilor MacNair made a motion to adjourn. Councilor Steil seconded the motion and passed unanimously.

There being no further business to come before Mayor and Council, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

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Ella Fast, City Clerk



**Sanitary Sewer Feasibility Study  
For the  
City of Sky Valley, Georgia**

**November 21, 2017**

Prepared by:



303 Swanson Drive, Lawrenceville, GA 30043  
phone 770-962-1387 fax # 770-962-8010  
[www.eminc.biz](http://www.eminc.biz)



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### **Exhibits**

- Exhibit 1: Preliminary Layout Maps of Sky Valley Collection System and Pumping System to Rabun County WSA WWTF
- Exhibit 2: Estimated Project Costs;  
    Option 1.A: Sewer System Collection and Pump to RCWSA, One Lift Station  
    Option 1.B: Sewer System Collection and Pump to RCWSA, Two Lift Stations  
    Option 2: Sewer System Collection and Pump to On-site Membrane Bioreactor and Reuse Land Application
- Exhibit 3: Phase Approach Cost Estimates

## **I. Executive Summary**

This study has been authorized by the Mayor and Council Members of the City of Sky Valley. This effort is supported by the Rabun County Board of Commissioners and Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority (RCWSA).

## **II. Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to investigate the feasibility of constructing a sanitary sewer collection system for the higher density residential and potential commercial areas within the City of Sky Valley, Georgia. The report will also discuss various options for wastewater disposal either through on-site treatment or through the transmission of the collected wastewater to a wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) owned and operated by a neighboring governmental entity.

The City of Sky Valley owns and operates a municipal water supply system for its residents and tourist trade. Wastewater treatment and disposal is currently not provided by the City but is accomplished by the use of individual and multi-unit onsite septic systems. These systems tend to function well during dry weather and low use conditions. During wet weather conditions and during the tourist season the septic systems fail or function marginally.

Numerous drain fields have saturated over the years, and needed to be relocated and replaced. In some cases, drain fields have been relocated multiple times, and are being pumped to remote locations. The options for new locations for these fields are limited and, in some cases, non-existent.

Commercial and tourism development in Sky Valley has been severely hampered and essentially impossible with the absence of an adequate sanitary sewerage collection and treatment system. Various developers and commercial interests have contacted the City with interests of developing hotels, convention centers, condos, and senior living facilities; however, the lack of a central sanitary sewer system has dissuaded development. The similar consensus among interested developers has been "let us know when you get sewer."

Although many properties throughout Sky Valley will not initially receive sanitary sewer service with this project, the implementation of the proposed sanitary sewer system would benefit all residents and property owners by providing economic development stimulus. The economic benefit would include increased tax revenue through increased commercial businesses and tax revenues through hotel/motel taxes. Residents and visitors would also enjoy the benefit of shopping and dining locally rather than driving 30 minutes to another town for dining, groceries, or other conveniences.

This report investigates the economic feasibility and technical aspects of constructing a sanitary sewer collection system for the higher-density residential and potential commercial areas within the City of Sky Valley, and various options of treatment or disposal of the wastewater. Included as part of this report are discussions regarding the need of the project, planning and engineering information, proposed solutions and estimated costs of construction, as well as financial and institutional considerations.

### III. **Background**

#### **A. Existing Conditions**

The City of Sky Valley is a recreation/resort community located in Rabun County in the northeast corner of Georgia (see Figure 1). The City covers approximately 3.0 square miles of land situated in a stream valley; at an elevation of 3,410 feet it is Georgia's highest city. Sky Valley's origins began with the development of the Sky Valley Ski Resort on a former cattle ranch in the valley in 1969. In March of 1978, the Georgia legislature approved a charter for the City of Sky Valley.

The City has an estimated population of 325 full time residents.<sup>1</sup> With the large number of rental and seasonal homes in the area, the City receives an average of 300 visitors per month and over 450 visitors per month in the busiest months of the year.

Sky Valley adjoins thousands of acres of National Forest and, while no longer offering skiing opportunities, other recreational activities available to Sky Valley residents and visitors include golfing, tennis, swimming, hiking, fishing, and biking.

As previously discussed, there is no central wastewater service in Sky Valley, and all properties including condos, timeshares, multi-family units and commercial properties are presently being served by individual and multi-unit onsite septic systems. Due to poor soils, high usage periods and wet weather conditions many of the systems have failed. When the systems fail, raw sewage surfaces above ground, and thus poses a public health threat. Septic systems also discourage residential and commercial growth in the community. Various developers have contacted the City with interests of developing hotels, convention centers, condos, and senior living facilities; however, the lack of a central sanitary sewer system has dissuaded development. Public sanitary sewer service is an essential element needed for a community to progress.

Replacement of existing septic tanks with a public sewer system will also eliminate the potential health and safety risks associated with failing septic tanks, such as polluting the groundwater supply and increasing potential for disease-causing pathogens from entering the waterways. The residents have expressed concern about the health risks in having raw sewage discharging on the ground surface. A new collection system will greatly improve the quality of life for the residents and tourists that visit this community.

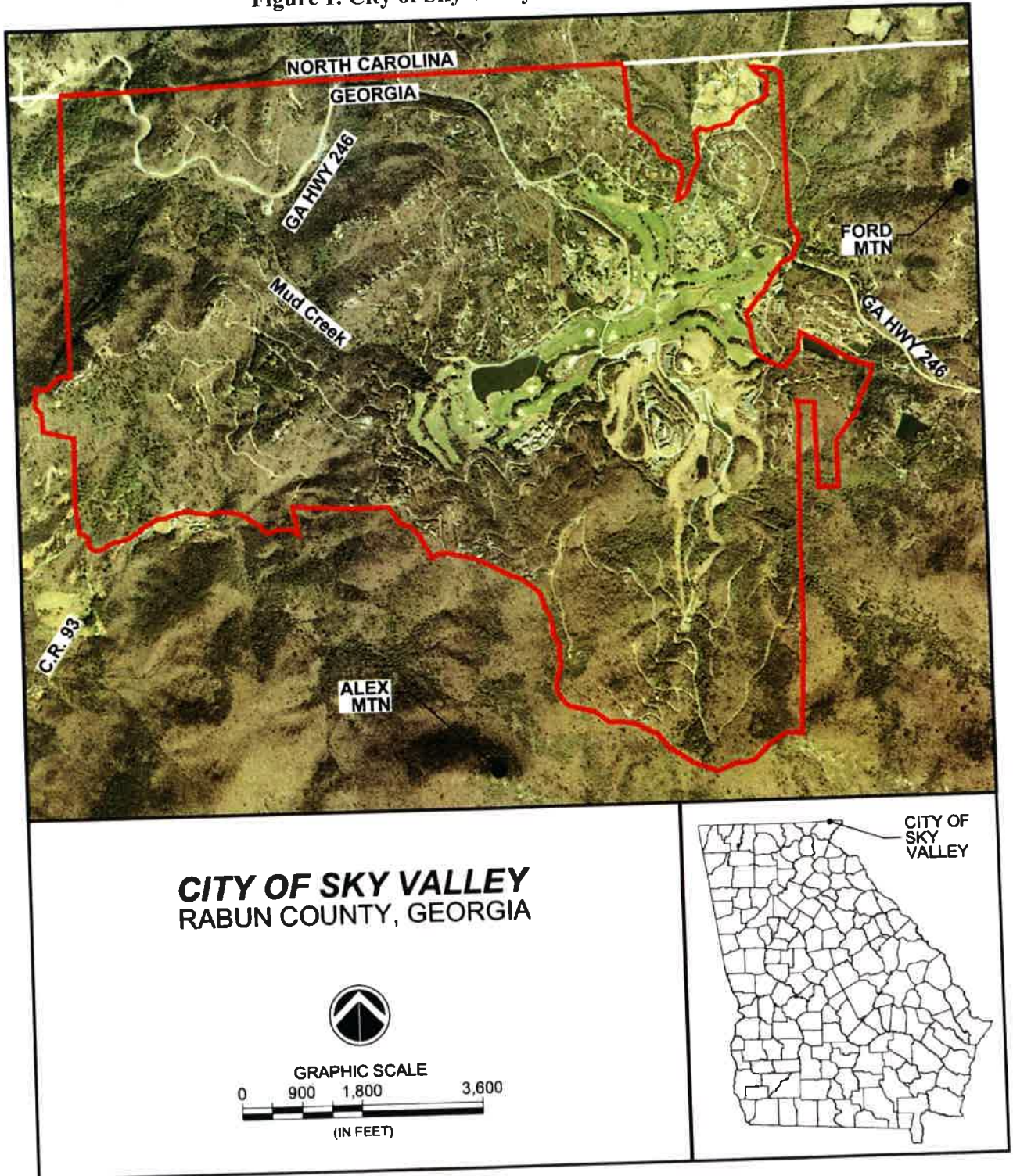
In addition to the reduced risk to health and the environment from the project, the City, including residents and businesses, will benefit from this project through the increased tourism and commercial conveniences attracted through the addition of the proposed sanitary sewer system.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Figure 1. City of Sky Valley Location Map



## 1. Existing Water System and Customers

The City of Sky Valley operates a public water system serving primarily residential customers.

The existing water system consists of four operating groundwater supply wells, four out-of-service wells, five elevated storage tanks, a booster pump station to serve customers in an area of higher elevations, and a distribution network of PVC pipelines ranging from 2” to 6” diameter in size. There are three pressure zones and 14 pressure reducing valves in the system. Timers control the operation of the well pumps and one tank is filled manually.

Production rates of the existing wells that provide the supply for the Sky Valley water system are summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1. Sky Valley Water Supply**

Well	Status	Production Rate (gpm)
1	abandoned	N/A
2	abandoned	N/A
3	abandoned	N/A
4	active	32
5	abandoned	N/A
6	active	24
7	active	25
8	active	125
<b>Total Water Supply:</b>		<b>206 gpm (178,000 gpd at 60% yield)</b>

The City’s present Water Withdrawal Permit from Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) currently permits a monthly average withdrawal of 0.3 million gallons per day (mgd).

Elevated water tanks provide all the available storage for the Sky Valley water system. Information regarding the elevated tanks is summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. Water Storage – Elevated Tanks**

Tank	Description	Storage Volume (gallons)
1	Bayberry	68,000
2	Alex Mountain	108,000
3	Sky High	108,000
4	Schonberg	65,000
5	Wildbird	60,000
<b>Total Available Water Storage:</b>		<b>409,000 gallons</b>

## 2. Proposed Sanitary Sewer Collection Area

The proposed sewer service area will serve the existing high-density areas including existing condos, rental units, multi-family units, golf course/ski lodge, as well as a proposed hotel/convention center, and potential future developments that may include condos, residential, commercial, or senior living facilities. It would be difficult and costly to provide sewer service to the majority of the residents due to the topography and existing layout of Sky Valley; therefore, the greatest benefit and affordable option would be to serve the highest-density areas that can easily be served sewer, which also have the greatest needs. The preliminary sewer service area is shown on the map provided in Exhibit 1.

### B. Previous Studies and Findings

A Preliminary Engineering Report was prepared in 1999 by Precision Planning, Inc for a Proposed Sanitary Sewer Collection and Treatment System, which discussed the need for a public sanitary sewer system, and discussed numerous options and costs estimates for wastewater collection and treatment alternatives. Sewage collection options included conventional gravity sewer, low pressure gravity sewer, and variable grade effluent sewer. Wastewater treatment alternatives included pumping wastewater to City of Dillard Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) for contract treatment services, slow-rate land application, urban water reuse, mechanical treatment facility, and water reuse system with wet weather discharge. The report does not recommend a particular wastewater collection option or a specific wastewater treatment option, but does discuss the design guidelines, benefits, potential problems, and probable estimate of costs for each alternative.

A Design Development Report (DDR) was prepared in September 2007 for the Merrill Trust development for the design of a water reclamation and reuse facility. The DDR proposed a coarse and fine screening, membrane bioreactor (MBR) for treatment of the wastewater followed by UV disinfection prior to land application onto the golf course or spray fields. Phase one would treat 175,000 gallons per day (gpd), with a phase 2 expansion to 350,000 gpd. The estimated construction cost in 2007 was \$2.0 million.

Along side the DDR, an unofficial study was developed for the Merrill Trust development to determine the feasibility of collecting the wastewater and convey 0.35 MGD of wastewater to the Rabun County WWTF. This effort terminated with a proposal for engineering services which included the design of a sewage pumping station, approximately 1,900 LF of 10" gravity sewer, approximately 7,500 LF of 8" gravity sewer, approximately 25,000 LF of 8" force main, and tankage for gravity force main.

### C. Benefits

The benefits of a sanitary sewer system are multi-faceted. The proposed sanitary sewer collection system will 1) eliminate existing wastewater issues in the highest-density areas, 2) improve health and sanitation, 3) improve tourism and amenities for residents, and 4) increase tax revenue through the hotel/motel tax, sales tax, and income tax.



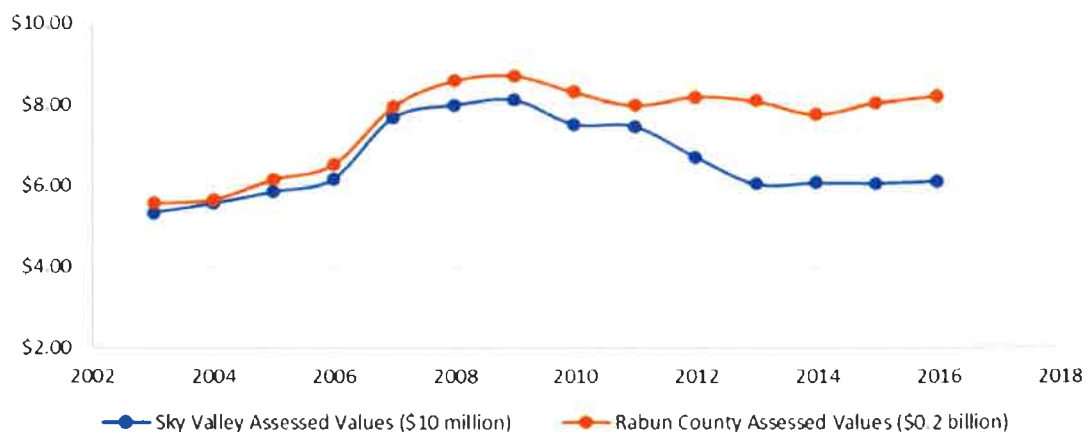
As discussed, there have been numerous septic tank, line, and field failures, and there are limited options for replacing the septic drain fields. The repairs are costly and due to soil conditions and high density, these repairs and replacement are often insufficient. Sewage spills can negatively impact health and sanitation; raw sewage exposed to ground surfaces in the dwelling areas pose a great risk of disease contraction.

Various developers have contacted the City with interests of developing hotels, convention centers, condos, and senior living facilities; however, the lack of a central sanitary sewer system has dissuaded development. A Public Benefit Analysis prepared for a Senior Living Center in Hiawassee, Georgia with an estimated 134 residents in 34 cottages and 83 assisted/independent living rooms, estimated an annual sales tax income of \$12,030 and annual income tax of \$58,030. Furthermore, an 80-room hotel could bring some \$50,000 annually in hotel/motel taxes.<sup>2</sup>

The City would benefit financially with the proposed hotel and additional condos through its Hotel/Motel tax. The Sky Valley Golf Club has expressed a need for additional hotel accommodations so that it could host larger events. In addition, increased visitors and residents will increase revenue to the Sky Valley Golf Club, and commercial properties could increase the City's and County sales tax revenues and SPLOST fund revenues.

Since the recent recession, the City of Sky Valley has experienced decreased property values and decreased revenue from taxes. According to Tax Digest numbers, property values within Sky Valley peaked at total of approximately \$81 million in 2009, and dropped by 33% over the next four years and has stayed steadily at around \$60-61 million from 2013-2017. The 2017 real and personal values are lower than they were in 2006. Figure 2 provides a graph of the Historical Assessed Real and Personal Tax Digest for the City of Sky Valley and Rabun County. In order to compare the long-term trending, the assessed values for Sky Valley are shown in \$10 million, and the assessed values for Rabun County are shown in \$0.2 billion.

**Figure 2. City of Sky Valley's Historical Assessed Real and Personal Tax Digest**



<sup>2</sup> Based on a 3% hotel/motel tax, at a \$120/night room rate with 50% occupancy

The City of Sky Valley has not experienced any sign of economic recovery that many other communities within Georgia have relished, such as Rabun County as a whole. Like Sky Valley, Rabun County's assessed values peak in 2009 at \$1.742 billion. In 2016, the assessed values were \$1.641, which is 6% below the assessed value at its peak prior to the recession; Rabun County as a whole has nearly recovered from the recession, while in 2016 Sky Valley still lagged by 34% from the assessed value at its peak.

The proposed sewer system will provide the City with an economic boost with new hotels, senior-living facilities, restaurants, and shops. The economic benefits of the sewer system will extend to property owners by increasing property values to at least the levels prior to the recession.

Based on the 2016 Incorporated Rabun County Millage Rate of 9.14 mills, the County could receive an increase in tax revenue of approximately \$184,000 annually with a 33% increase in property values. Based on the City's 2016 millage rate of 16.083, the City could receive an increase in tax revenue of approximately \$324,000 annually. As discussed, the economic benefits from the proposed sewer system could possibly increase tax revenue for the City and County through many possible avenues, as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Potential Tax Revenues from Proposed Sewer System**

Potential Tax Revenue Source	Estimated Additional Annual Tax Revenue
Sales Tax- Senior Living Facility, 134-residents	\$12,000
Income Tax- Senior Living Facility, 134-residents	\$58,000
3% Hotel/motel Tax – 80-room Hotel	\$50,000
County Real and Personal Tax Levy -33% increase	\$184,000
City Real and Personal Tax Levy -33% increase	\$324,000

#### **IV. Existing and Future Sanitary Sewer Flows**

##### **A. Existing Flows in Proposed Sanitary Sewer Service Area**

The existing developments within the proposed sewer service area are located within the City of Sky Valley are presently being served by individual and multi-family septic systems. Because there is no way to measure actual wastewater flows, the City's wastewater treatment demands can best be determined by evaluating the current water usages. The City maintains accurate records of water usage.

A summary of the 2015 water usage for the existing water customers that are located within the proposed sewer service area is provided in Table 4.



**Table 4. 2015 Water Usage for Existing Water Customers in the Proposed Sky Valley Sewer Service Area**

Type	No of units	Total Annual Water Usage (gal)	Total Average Monthly Usage (gal)	Total Peak Monthly Usage (gal)
Clubhouse	1	260,500	21,708	78,700
Commercial	1	819,990	68,333	104,730
Condo/Timeshare	196	3,229,887	266,977	647,281
Laundry	1	290,190	24,183	31,310
Lodge	1	52,800	4,800	10,900
Residential (estimated)	13	189,920	15,826	23,710
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>4,843,287</b>	<b>401,827</b>	<b>896,631</b>
<b>Total gpd</b>			<b>13,394</b>	<b>29,888</b>

According to the 2015 water usage records the peak monthly water use was approximately 0.9 million gallons for the existing water customers located within the proposed sewer service area. Interestingly, this same data was collected in 1997 for a similar sewer study, and the average water usage was 0.598 million gallons per month with a peak of 1.482 million gallons per month. Due to the increase in flow control devices and increased water conservation practices, water usage has decreased by 33% from 1997 to 2015.

**B. Projected Flows in Proposed Sanitary Sewer Service Area**

The design flowrate should include future capacity for commercial and residential growth as shown in the proposed sewer service area. As mentioned previously, various developers have contacted the City with interests of developing hotels, convention centers, condos, and senior living facilities. The wastewater design flow rate based on the above considerations is summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5. Project Wastewater Design Flows for the Proposed Sky Valley Sewer Service Area**

Name	No of units	Design average daily flow (gpd)
Existing Water Customers	213	29,900
Hotel (80-rooms)	1	8,000
Hotel Convention Center	1	400
Hotel Restaurant (200 seats)	1	10,000
Senior Living Facility (60-rooms)	1	3,600
Commercial Retail units	6	4,800
Restaurant (40 seats)	1	2,000
Restaurant (60 seats)	1	3,000
Condo/timeshare	50	5,000
Residential	30	3,000
<b>Design Wastewater Flowrate</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>69,700</b>

## V. Proposed Sanitary Sewer System

### A. Proposed Sanitary Sewer Collection System

The proposed sanitary sewer collection system will include approximately 15,400 linear feet (LF) of 8-inch and 12-inch gravity sewer with approximately 65 manholes. 12-inch lines are recommended in areas with relatively flat topography.

The gravity sewer will collect and transmit sewer on all or a portion of the following roads: Sky Valley Way, Tahoe Road, Driver Lane, Ridgepole Road, Berkshire Lane, Spy Glass Circle, Nesting Eagle Lane, Knob Drive, and Overlook Drive. The proposed collection system will serve the majority of the condos/ timeshares/ multi-family housing including: Lacosta, Winged Foot, Sawgrass, Glenn Abbey, A Condos, B Condos, C Condos, D Condos, E Condos, F Condos, August I, Augusta II, Turnberry, Oakmont, Doral, Woodlands, Scioto, Muirfield, Broodmoor, Forest Hills, Tanglewood, Cypress Point, Valley View, and Nesting Eagle. In addition to the multi-family developments, the sewer system will also serve the Sky Valley Lodge, clubhouse, laundry, timeshare office, and approximately thirteen existing single-home residences.

The proposed sewer collection system was located to avoid the golf course greens and fairways. The only unavoidable golf course crossing is on the eastern side of the course, in which an underground gravity sewer pipe will be installed across approximately 120 LF of fairway through either open cut method or jack and bore. This crossing is necessary to serve the Forest Hills and Broadmoor condos. Open cut would involve cutting a trench through the grass, installing the sewerline, and replacing the grass. An alternative to open cut, is installing the gravity sewer line via jack and bore instead of an open trench in order to minimize disturbance to the fairway. The jack and bore method would involve the excavation of a bore pit and the use of a boring machine to bore a casing through the ground, then inserting the gravity sewer pipe into the underground casing.

In addition to the fairway crossing, the proposed gravity sewer installation will also involve the demolition and reconstruction of approximately 1400 LF of golf cart path, which is necessary to serve Valley View Condos.

Possible constructability problems may include working around existing utilities, and golf course irrigation lines. In addition, manholes will need to be flush with the pavement and bolted down that are located within the roadways or golf cart paths, in order to prevent issues for the snow plow. The locations of existing septic systems are unknown and could impact the gravity sewer layout and design.

The wastewater will be collected through the gravity sewer system shown as orange on the map provided in **Exhibit 1**. The wastewater will flow by gravity to the proposed lift station. The proposed preliminary design location of the lift station is behind the lodge. The lodge and property is owned by the Merrill Trust Company, and the City would need to acquire an easement from the development company.

## B. Wastewater Transfer

The proposed preliminary design location of the lift station is behind the lodge. The proposed lift station would be located adjacent to several existing utilities and near an existing utility shed. The view of the proposed lift station will be blocked by the Lodge and surrounding trees under underbrush from most angles. The size of the lift station will be approximately 50'x50' with fencing. The proposed location will also eliminate the need for an access drive.

Although, much of the lift station will be concealed, it will still be visible to many residents and visitors, and therefore, it is recommended that the lift station site include beautification features, such as upgraded fencing and/or shrubs. The photos below provide examples of lift stations which utilize privacy fencing.



## C. Wastewater Treatment Options

From the proposed lift station, the wastewater can either be pumped to 1) an on-site treatment facility, or 2) pumped out of Sky Valley to a wastewater treatment facility owned by another entity.

### 1. Off-site Wastewater Treatment Facility

This alternative includes pumping the wastewater from the proposed lift station off-site out of Sky Valley to an existing wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) owned by another entity. There are two nearby WWTFs; the Rabun County WSA WWTF and the City of Dillard WWTF.

Either facility is accessible; however, the Rabun County WSA has plenty of capacity to accept and treat the wastewater. The Rabun County plant has a permitted treatment capacity of 0.50 MGD and is permitted to increase to 2.0 MGD, and has a current peak flow of 0.155 MGD. An alternative treatment of the wastewater is sending the wastewater to the Dillard WWTF.

The sewer will be pumped through a proposed force main from the pump station along existing roadways within Sky Valley. The proposed force main route includes Ridgepole Drive, Labelle Circle, Evergreen Lane, and Crusher Run to Kelly's Creek Road. For service delivery, it is important to note that potential customers along the force main route cannot be served sewer service and cannot be connected to the force main since the force main is under pressure.

From Kelly's Creek Road, the wastewater can be transported through either of three options: 1) continuation of the force main along Kelly's Creek Road from the Sky Valley lodge lift station with discharge at the Rabun County WSA WWTF, 2) a second pump station to the Rabun County WSA WWTF, or 3) a second pump station at Kelly's Creek Road to the City of Dillard WWTF. A fourth alternative to transfer the wastewater by a gravity sewer line to the Rabun County WSA WWTF was eliminated due to the inability to discharge the wastewater into the shallow manhole at the WWTF. The proposed gravity sewer would be well below the bottom of the existing manhole.

Alternative #3 to pump to the City of Dillard WWTF has not been considered further within this report due to the wastewater treatment availability and interest from the Rabun County WSA. The first two alternatives are discussed further as follows:

**a) Single Lift Station and Force Main**

Option 1.A is to install a single lift station and force main from the Sky Valley lodge lift station to Rabun County WSA WWTF. The wastewater can potentially be transported from the Sky Valley lodge lift station through a single force main to the Rabun County WSA WWTF. From Kelly's Creek Road, the force main would continue along Kelly's Creek Road and Yorkhouse Road to the WWTF. The proposed single pumping option will include approximately one lift station, and 28,900 linear feet (LF) of 6-inch force main.

There may be operation and maintenance issues with this alternative due to the large drop in elevation of the force main along Evergreen Lane and Crusher Run followed by a slight elevation rise along Kelly's Creek Road.

Once the pumps turn off and the wastewater is pumped past the highpoint at Labelle Circle (shown as the change from the green line to the red line), the wastewater will flow by gravity down to the low point at Kelly's Creek Road, which is allowed by the implementation of a combination air relief vacuum breaker valve, installed at the high point, that will eliminate air and prevent vacuum formations in the pipeline.

The majority of the wastewater would be pumped over this elevation rise along Kelly's Creek Road by the pressure created by the gravitational fall as the wastewater flows down Crusher Run; however, not all of the wastewater will be eliminated from the force main. The next pump run will push this wastewater to the WWTF, but then a new volume of wastewater would be left sitting in the force main pipe.



The wastewater left sitting in the force main between pump runs can become septic which can deteriorate the pipe, pipe fittings and valves, or cause downstream issues at the WWTF. Sitting wastewater can also settle out debris which can clog the force main. Access points, also known as “pig ports,” are suggested for the maintenance of the force main pipe. The Access point will allow operators to insert a “pig,” or cleaning device, into the line to that debris in the line can be removed.

A preliminary cost estimate for Option 1.A and is provided in **Exhibit 2**.

#### **b) Two Lift Stations and Two Force Mains**

Option 1.B is to install two lift stations and two force mains from the Sky Valley lodge lift station to Rabun County WSA WWTF. An alternative method to transporting the wastewater to the Rabun County WSA WWTF is to install a second lift station at Kelly’s Creek Road and pump the wastewater through a force main along Kelly’s Creek Road and Yorkhouse Road to the WWTF. This option will include two lift stations, and approximately 28,900 linear feet (LF) of 6-inch force main.

This alternative has the advantage of less operational and maintenance issues listed in the previous section and also has the ability to serve additional customers located near the proposed pump station; however, this alternative also has the additional cost of constructing, operating, and maintaining an additional lift station.

The location of the second lift station and force main route are preliminary and can be altered in order to accommodate the Rabun County WSA and any potential customers, or in order to avoid any land acquisition or environmental issues encountered during design.

A preliminary cost estimate for Option 1.B and is provided in **Exhibit 2**.

## **2. On-site Reuse Land Application System Treatment Option**

A previous study prepared in 2007 for the Merrill Trust Development investigated constructing an on-site land application system. Wastewater would be pumped from the proposed lift station to a proposed land application system (LAS) located within Sky Valley.

The 2007 study proposed a coarse and fine screening, membrane bioreactor (MBR) for treatment of the wastewater followed by UV disinfection prior to land application onto the golf course or spray fields. Phase one would treat 175,000 gallons per day (gpd), with a phase 2 expansion to 350,000 gpd. The phase one capacity would be sufficient for the proposed sewer service area with design flowrate of 70,000 gpd, and 2.5 peak factor of 175,000 gpd.

An on-site treatment system for the City of Sky Valley will have more restrictions than an average facility because of the local trout streams and the restrictions designated to

this class of stream. Previously EPD rejected a request to discharge treated wastewater into a local stream due to the stream's characteristics of low flow and trout designation.

Therefore, the treated wastewater will need to be land applied through a Land Application System (LAS). Since land is limited and the golf course is available, the obvious solution would be to treat the wastewater to high-quality reuse standards. However, a small-scale reuse land application system will have high costs per volume wastewater treated. In addition, the LAS option would also require additional operation and maintenance costs to operate the facility. Additional storage may also be required during the winter months due to the limited ability to land apply the wastewater during freezing weather.

A preliminary cost estimate was developed for Option 2 and is provided in **Exhibit 2**.

## **VI. Evaluation of Alternatives**

When deciding on potential options for a proposed project, the preliminary costs, as well as long-term operation and maintenance cost need to be considered.

### **A. Construction challenges relating to options**

All three options have the same challenges for construction of the gravity sewer collection system. Tight spaces, existing utilities, golf course, and golf cart paths will create construction challenges. It is likely that several permanent and temporary construction easements will be required for the gravity sewer lines. A permanent easement for lift station sites will also be required.

Options 1.A and 1.B will require an easement along Old Kelsey Mountain Road for the forcemain.

Option 2 will require the additional construction of the treatment facility as well as construction of the reuse lines and spray heads onto the golf course. There will be additional construction challenges due to existing irrigation lines and the golf course.

### **B. Projected Operating and Maintenance Expenses**

For all three options (1.A, 1.B, and 2), the cost to operate and maintain the sewer collection system and lift station(s) is estimated at \$30,000 per year. For options 1.A and 1.B, with a current annual water usage for sewer service area of 4,843,000 gal/year, and a treatment fee of \$6.50 per thousand gallons, the total annual treatment cost is \$31,480. For option 2, it is estimated that the annual cost to operate the wastewater treatment facility would be approximately \$120,000 per year.

### **C. Project Alternative Cost Evaluation**

An alternative evaluation is provided in Table 6, which assumes that all project costs are funded through a 20-year loan with an annual interest rate of 3.0%, plus operation and maintenance costs. Option 1.A is the least costly of all of the alternatives.

**Table 6. Project Alternative Evaluation**

	Option 1.A	Option 1.B	Option 2
	Pump to RCWSA, 1 Lift Station	Pump to RCWSA, 2 Lift Stations	On-Site MBR LAS
<b>Proposed Project Cost</b>			
Construction Costs	\$3,450,000	\$3,849,300	\$7,290,000
Support Costs	\$855,000	\$921,700	\$1,610,000
Total Costs	\$4,305,000	\$4,771,000	\$8,900,000
<b>Annual Payment</b>			
Annual Payment (Based on 30-year loan at 3.0% interest rate)	\$217,801	\$241,377	\$450,273
<b>Annual Operation and Maintenance Cost</b>			
Annual Treatment Costs, RCWSA at \$6.50 per 1000 gal*	\$31,480	\$31,480	\$0.00
Cost to Operate Collection System, per year	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Cost to Operate WWTF, per yr	\$0	\$0	\$120,000
Total Annual O&M Cost	\$61,480	\$61,480	\$150,000
<b>Summary of Annual Costs</b>			
Annual Payment	\$217,801	\$241,377	\$450,273
Annual O&M Cost	\$61,480	\$61,480	\$150,000
Total Annual Costs	\$279,280	\$302,856	\$600,273

\* Current annual water usage for Sewer Service Area is 4,843,000 gal/year

#### D. Alternative Summary and Recommendations

The proposed project recommendation is Option 1.A, the construction of the sanitary sewer collection system and installation a single pump station to pump the wastewater to the Rabun County WSA WWTF. Option 1.A has the lowest estimated project costs as well as operation costs. Option 1.B should be considered if additional customers are to be served in or near the Kelly's Creek Road area. These potential customers are located within the Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority service delivery area. Therefore, the Authority could have the opportunity to contribute to the project and serve additional customers.

The proposed map is provided in **Exhibit 1**. The preliminary cost estimate for the proposed preferred Option 1.A is provided in **Exhibit 2**.

### VII. Financial and Institutional Considerations

#### A. MOU and Inter-Municipal Agreements

MOU and/or Inter-Municipal Agreements would be required between the City of Sky Valley and the Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority for the treatment of the wastewater and

possibility of the consolidation of the proposed Sky Valley sewer system into the Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority.

## **B. Funding Alternatives**

Rabun County as a whole is an “At-Risk” County according to the 2017 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The Appalachian Regional Commission uses an index-based county economic classification system to identify and monitor the economic status of Appalachian counties. The system compares each county's averages for three economic indicators—three-year average unemployment rate, per capita market income, and poverty rate—with national averages. The resulting values are summed and averaged to create a composite index value for each county. Each county in the nation is then ranked, based on its composite index value. Counties are designated as distressed, at-risk, competitive, or attainment, based on their ranking in the index. Designations are revised annually using the most current data available.

While Sky Valley does have a relatively high per capita income, both ARC and the OneGeorgia Authority review grant applications based on County designations. Rabun County has distinct disadvantages, including lack of rail, lack of a nearby Interstate Highway and others.

The maximum grant amount both of these programs is \$600,000 for ARC and \$500,000 for OneGeorgia. The City has a good potential to achieve the maximum amount for both of these grants with a commitment letter that includes a substantial amount of job creation from an interested developer. In many cases, in “At-Risk” Counties, potential job creation and economic development is sufficient to receive funding.

In addition, we recommend using SPLOST and/or County dollars to fund the pavement repairs associated with the project, if the City and County will support this use of funds.

The remaining funds can be obtained through a low interest loan through either the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) through its Georgia Fund loan program or the Clean Water State Revolving (CWSRF) loan program, or through the USDA Rural Development water, wastewater, solid waste disposal program. While the GEFA CWSRF program does offer principal forgiveness for some projects, based on the 2017 Affordability Criteria, this project would not qualify for principal forgiveness. Similarly, USDA-RD offers grants to communities whose median household income (MHI) fall below specific thresholds; however, the MHI in Sky Valley is too high to qualify for any grant money. Table 7 provides alternatives for funding options. Funding sources includes: ARC \$600,000; OneGeorgia \$500,000; SPLOST \$760,000; and three potential loan sources for the remaining \$2,445,000.



**Table 7. Funding Options and Potential Loan Sources**

Total Project Cost	\$4,305,000		
Potential ARC Grant	\$600,000		
Potential OneGeorgia Grant	\$500,000		
SPLOST / County input for pavement repair	\$760,000		
Remaining Loan Amount	\$2,445,000		
<b>Loan Source Alternatives</b>	<b>GEFA Georgia Fund</b>	<b>GEFA CWSRF</b>	<b>USDA-RD</b>
Interest Rate	2.39%	2.70%	3.375%
Length	20	30	40
Annual Payment	\$153,906	\$119,002	\$111,471
Total Cost over Amortization Period	\$3,078,121	\$3,570,070	\$4,458,858

Although the GEFA Georgia Fund offers the lowest interest rate, the maximum payment length is 20-years, which makes the annual payments the highest, and least affordable for the City. USDA-RD offers the longest payment period of 40-years, but also has the highest interest rate. The GEFA CWSRF has a maximum payment period of 30-years and an interest between that of the Georgia Fund and USDA-RD. The payment for the GEFA CWSRF is only \$8,640 more annually (\$720 monthly) than the USDA-RD, but has a payment period of 30-years rather than 40-years, and the City would save over \$1 million over the length of the loan with the GEFA CWSRF. In addition, the application process is quicker and simpler through GEFA than through USDA-RD. Therefore, we would recommend that the City pursue a GEFA CWSRF loan for the financing of the remaining portion of the project.

**C. Other Funding Options**

The City of Sky Valley may also want to consider a referendum to obligate funds from the general fund to repay a portion of the GEFA loan in order to help fund the project as an economic development project. According to the 2016 Published Tax Digest, 1 mil produces approximately \$59,000 annually. The City could create a referendum for General Obligation Debt to assist in the annual costs of the sewer system project. Assuming a AA 25-year bond, the City could levy 1.0 mils for an income of approximately \$59,000 annually to be obligate to repay a portion of the proposed GEFA debt service. The consideration behind creating a General Obligation Debt is that all citizens within Sky Valley would benefit from the sewer system regardless of whether they receive sewer service. The sewer system will attract hotels, restaurants, convenience store, and other shops that will benefit the City with increase of tax revenues and the citizens with the increased conveniences. Citizens would need to vote on the General Obligation Debt. The City-wide tax base would help to cover the costs of the sewer system in its early stages throughout the 20-year duration of the debt service. The proposed sewer system would be an economic development project, and the City would need to ask its citizens if they support such an economic development project and ask the citizens to vote for the referendum for a General Obligation Debt.

#### **D. User Cost Analysis and Affordability**

Even with the proposed \$1.86 million in grant and SPLOST funds, the remaining costs for the project is \$2,445,000, which equates to an annual payment of \$119,002 for a GEFA CWSRF 30-year loan at 2.70%. With the additional operation and maintenance cost, the effective rate for current customers would be \$37.27 per 1000 gallons (see Scenario 1 in Table 8 below). A typical residential customer in Georgia uses an average of 3,500 gallons per month, which would result in a monthly sewer bill of \$130.43. Due to being a recreation/resort community, the average Sky Valley residential/timeshare/condo customer's monthly water usage is 1,353 gallons per month, which results in a monthly sewer bill of \$50.42. If considering a typical usage of 3,500 gal/month, a monthly sewer bill of \$130.43 is extravagant. Due to the high sewer rates required to fund the proposed project, EMI has developed several scenarios as possibilities for the City to reduce these sewer rates. Table 8 provide the following five potential scenarios:

- Scenario 1: Proposed project with funding as proposed. Construct Option 1.A with current sewer flow demands. Funding includes: ARC \$600,000; OneGeorgia \$500,000; SPLOST \$760,000; GEFA CWSRF 30-yr loan at 2.70%
- Scenario 2: Scenario 1, but with a reduced treatment cost of \$4.00 per thousand (reduced from \$6.50 per thousand gallons)
- Scenario 3: Scenario 1, but with a levy of 1.0 mil in General Obligation Debt
- Scenario 4: Scenario 1, but with the addition of a proposed hotel in addition to current sewer flow demands.
- Scenario 5: Scenario 1, but with future estimated sewer flow demands instead of current sewer flow demands.

**Table 8. Required User Rates to Fund Sewer System based on Five Scenarios**

	<b>Scenario 1</b>	<b>Scenario 2</b>	<b>Scenario 3</b>	<b>Scenario 4</b>	<b>Scenario 5</b>
	As Proposed	Reduced Treatment Cost	General Obligation Debt	Addition of Hotel	Future Estimated Flows
<b>Annual Payment Cost</b>					
GEFA CWSRF, 30-year loan at 2.70%	\$119,002	\$119,002	\$119,002	\$119,002	\$119,002
Levy of 1.0 mil in General Obligation	\$0	\$0	(\$59,000)	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Annual Payment Cost</b>	<b>\$119,002</b>	<b>\$119,002</b>	<b>\$60,002</b>	<b>\$119,002</b>	<b>\$119,002</b>
<b>Annual Operation and Maintenance Cost</b>					
Annual Treatment Costs, RCWSA at \$6.50 per 1000 gal	\$31,480	\$0	\$31,480	\$43,554	\$72,293
Annual Treatment Costs, RCWSA at \$4.00 per 1000 gal	\$0	\$19,372	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cost to Operate Collection System, per year	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
<b>Total Annual Operation and Maintenance Cost</b>	<b>\$61,480</b>	<b>\$49,372</b>	<b>\$61,480</b>	<b>\$73,554</b>	<b>\$102,293</b>
<b>Summary of Annual Costs</b>					
Annual Payment	\$119,002	\$119,002	\$60,002	\$119,002	\$119,002
Annual Operation and Maintenance Cost	\$61,480	\$49,372	\$61,480	\$73,554	\$102,293
<b>Total Annual Costs</b>	<b>\$180,482</b>	<b>\$168,374</b>	<b>\$121,482</b>	<b>\$192,556</b>	<b>\$221,295</b>
<b>Rate and Monthly Bill</b>					
Annual water usage for sewer service area, gal/yr	4,843,000	4,843,000	4,843,000	6,700,600	11,122,000
Estimated Number of Units (Customers)	213	213	213	214	305
Effective Rate per 1000 gallons	\$37.27	\$34.77	\$25.08	\$28.74	\$19.90
Monthly Base Rate (Loan payment / no. units)	\$46.56	\$46.56	\$23.48	\$46.34	\$32.51
Usage Rate per 1000 gallons (O&M Costs/ 1000 gallons)	\$12.69	\$10.19	\$12.69	\$10.98	\$9.20
Average Monthly Bill at 1,353 gal/mo	\$63.73	\$60.35	\$40.65	\$61.19	\$44.96
Average Monthly Bill at 3,500 gal/mo	\$90.99	\$82.24	\$67.91	\$84.76	\$64.71

Scenario 1, which is the project and funding methods as proposed, would require a rate structure that would create an average monthly bill of \$60-\$90 per month per unit. For a timeshare/condo with 10 units, the monthly bill could be \$600-\$900 per month. Scenarios 2-3 provide alternatives to alleviate the burden on the limited sewer customers. Scenarios 4-5 provides scenarios with the proposed estimated flows with a hotel and future estimated flows, which shows how additional customers will also alleviate the burden on the current proposed sewer customers. It is likely that there will be a new commercial customer at the time of construction because the City will need the leverage of proposed jobs to receive both the ARC grant and the OneGeorgia grant.

The City of Sky Valley’s median household income (MHI) is \$71,250. USDA Rural Development considers a water or sewer bill above 1.0% of MHI as a burden on families. This MHI consideration is usually applied to low to moderate income families with MHI much lower than that of Sky Valley. However, we will use the 1.0% MHI as an example of appropriate sewer rates for the citizens of Sky Valley. An average monthly sewer bill of \$60 per month would be equivalent to 1.0% of the MHI ( $\$71,250 \times 1\% / 12 \text{ months}$ ).

Although these rates may appear high, replacement of a septic system or drain fields will be very costly and some units do not have any more options for relocation of septic systems. Therefore, many of these units will benefit greatly from the proposed sanitary sewer system.

**VIII. Implementation**

**A. Projected Implementation Schedule**

A project of this scope with the high number of grant and funding expectations with require a lengthy process of approximately three years. A general implementation schedule is provided as follows:

	Yearly Quarters											
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Funding												
Design												
Permitting												
Bid Phase												
Construction												
Closeout												

**B. Permitting and Review Agency requirements**

As with any municipal project of this magnitude, construction plans and specifications will have to be submitted to and approved by the EPD. In conjunction with this, erosion control and NPDES plans and permits will be required. Should it be necessary to cross or disturb any state waters, Army Corps of Engineers Preconstruction Notification may be required. Also, state and local roadway permits will be required for right-of-way encroachment and roadway crossings.

## **IX. Project Phasing Option**

The project costs involved in the establishment of a sanitary sewer system are oftentimes very expensive, and municipalities implementing these systems often lack a large customer base to fund a sanitary sewer project without overburdening its customer base. This report suggests several funding possibilities and funding sources, including grants, loans, and scenarios to reduce sewer rates. The only possibility of bringing the sewer rates to a feasible level without supplementing operating costs with General Revenue Funds or through the Water Fund is to receive all of the proposed grants and funds in the best-case circumstance. Therefore, the City may want to consider a phased approach to developing the sanitary sewer system.

The first phase would include a ‘skeleton’ lift station at the lodge and installing the forcemain from the lodge pump station to the Rabun County WWTF. The forcemain would be plugged to prevent any flow into line. The ‘skeleton’ lift station would be inoperable and would include the fencing, piping, and wetwell, but would exclude pumps, generator, and electrical panel. The preliminary total cost estimate for Phase 1 is \$1,700,000.

The proposed phase 1 would not provide sewer service to any customers, but would enable the City to proclaim that sewer service is available within the City. The phase 1 could potentially receive ARC and/or OneGeorgia grants based on economic development associated with tourism. These grants are much more tangible with associated job creation, however, Rabun County’s listing as “At-risk” could potentially enable the City to receive these grants with potential for enhancing tourism even without job creation.

There would be limited operation or maintenance costs associated with Phase 1, but since phase 1 will not serve any sewer customers and the City would not have an income to pay any debt service. Phase 1 would need to be funded through grants and contributions, or from the obligation of general funds. Potential contributors could be the City of Sky Valley General Fund or Water Fund, Rabun County, and its supporting agencies (Rabun Tourism Development Authority, Development Authority of Rabun County), SPLOST, or major land-owners within the City, such as Merrill Trust.

The sewer service availability within the City would allow the City to attract potential commercial businesses such as a hotel or a senior-living facility. The City could then leverage potential jobs associated with an interested business in order to receive an ARC grant and OneGeorgia grant towards phase 2.

Phase 2 would include completion of the pump station with pumps, remaining piping and valving, generator, and electrical panel, as well as installation of the gravity sewer collection system. Phase 2 could include the installation of all of the gravity sewer system which would create the largest customer base, or Phase 2 may only need to include the gravity sewer that is required to serve the proposed business; the City could install the remaining gravity sewer as needed through the interest and request of customers. The preliminary total cost estimate for Phase 2 is \$2,632,000.



Unlike Phase 1, Phase 2 would have additional operating maintenance costs as well as create sewer customers which would create a sewer system income to pay debt service and operation and maintenance costs.

Potential funding sources for Phase 2 include ARC (\$600,000), OneGeorgia (\$500,000), SPLOST (\$760,000), and GEFA CWSRF (\$772,000). The annual debt service payment for a 30-year GEFA CWSRF loan with a 2.7% interest rate is \$37,575. Including an estimated \$61,480 annual O&M costs, and using the same rate and monthly bill calculation that was used in Table 8 for scenario 1, the effective rate would be \$20.45 per 1000 gallons, for an estimated average monthly bill of \$31.88 for 1,353 gallons per month, or \$59.13 for 3,500 gallons per month. These rates would likely be lower due to the addition of new commercial customer(s).

**Exhibit 3** provides detailed Phase Approach Cost Estimates.

## **X. Conclusions and Recommendations**

The City of Sky Valley, its citizens, and its existing businesses will benefit greatly by the construction of a sanitary sewer system in its highest-density commercial area. With the implementation of a sewer system, the City will be able to attract interested hotels, convention centers, condos, senior living facilities, restaurants, shops, grocery and convenience stores. In addition, the proposed sewer service delivery area is limited from relocating failing septic systems, and alternatives for septic system and drain field replacement is costly.

Although many properties throughout Sky Valley will not receive sanitary sewer service with this project, the implementation of the proposed sanitary sewer system would benefit all residents and property owners by providing economic development improvements. The economic benefit would include increased tax revenue through increased commercial businesses and tax revenues through hotel/motel taxes. Residents and visitors would also benefit of shopping and dining locally rather than driving to another town for dining, groceries, or other conveniences.

We also recommend the City hold public meetings and receive public input for the implementation of this project. Support and need from the proposed sewer customers is pertinent to the realization of the project, since these customers will be funding the majority of the costs. Support for the project from the majority of the citizens, even those not receiving sewer service, could indicate that the City hold a referendum to obligate general funds to help pay debt service. If the Council receives positive support for the project, then we recommend proceeding with the proposed project.

The proposed project recommendation is Option 1.A, the construction of the sanitary sewer collection system and installation a single pump station to pump the wastewater to the Rabun County Water Sewer Authority WWTF. As mentioned previously, Option 1.A has the lowest estimated project costs as well as operation costs. The proposed gravity sewer collection system was carefully laid out as to avoid the majority of the golf course and is generally out-of-view. Much of the installation of the sewer lines will occur within the roadway; however, the City and

County could utilize SPLOST funds to repave these roads. The proposed lift station location will be concealed behind the Lodge with privacy fencing, and should not be too unsightly.

We recommend committing SPLOST funds towards the pavement repair and repaving. We also recommend that the City seek grant funding through ARC and OneGeorgia by obtaining commitment letter(s) from interested developer(s) with plans to develop projects that involve a substantial amount of job creation. The commitment letter can be utilized to apply for \$600,000 from ARC and \$500,000 from OneGeorgia.

Once the grants and SPLOST funds are available, we recommend proceeding with the project by means of proceeding with project design and permitting and securing GEFA CWSRF loan funds.

The City may also consider requesting the Rabun County Water and Sewer Authority to provide a reduced sewer treatment rate in the initial years of development of the sewer system to enhance the feasibility of the program.

In order to move forward with the project, we recommend that the City consider the option of phasing the project. The City would need to acquire commitments from contributors and also apply to ARC and/or OneGeorgia for possible grants. Design and construction would follow once funds are acquired. With the capability of providing sewer service to potential businesses, the City would be enabled to attract potential businesses.

**Exhibit 1:**  
**Preliminary Layout Maps of Sky Valley Collection System and  
Pumping System to Rabun County WSA WWTF**





SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM  
 FEASIBILITY STUDY  
 FOR THE  
 CITY OF SKY VALLEY, GEORGIA  
 PRELIMINARY SEWER ROUTE EXHIBIT  
 NOVEMBER 2017



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## **Exhibit 2:**

### **Estimated Project Costs**

**Option 1.A: Sewer System Collection and Pump to RCWSA, One Lift Station**

**Option 1.B: Sewer System Collection and Pump to RCWSA, Two Lift Stations**

**Option 2: Sewer System Collection and Pump to On-site Membrane Bioreactor  
and Reuse Land Application**

**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**  
**Option 1.A: Pump to RCWSA WWTF, One Lift Station**

7/11/17

<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>				
Item	Units	Unit Cost	Qty	Cost
<b>SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM</b>				
8" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$50	10,600	\$530,000
12" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$70	4,750	\$332,500
Manhole	EA	\$2,700	65	\$175,500
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	140	\$11,200
J&B, 12" Sewer with 24" casing	LF	\$300	250	\$75,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	9,000	\$360,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	1,000	\$70,000
Sewer Service Lateral	EA	\$2,000	45	\$90,000
Septic Tank Abandonment	EA	\$1,000	45	\$45,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	15,000	\$19,500
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	5,900	\$8,260
NPDES	LS	\$2,040	1.0	\$2,040
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,719,000</b>
<b>SINGLE LIFT STATION - PUMP TO RCWSA WWTF</b>				
Pump Station	EA	\$400,000	1	\$400,000
6" Dia. Forcemain	LF	\$20	28,900	\$578,000
6" Plug Valve	EA	\$1,500	12	\$18,000
Forcemain Pig Access Port	EA	\$700	1	\$700
Air Release/Vacuum Valve	EA	\$4,000	15	\$60,000
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	60	\$4,800
J&B, 6" FM with 12" casing	LF	\$180	200	\$36,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	10,000	\$400,000
Gravel Road Repair	LF	\$10	3,100	\$31,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	2,000	\$140,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	28,600	\$37,180
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	15,500	\$21,700
NPDES	EA	\$3,620	1.0	\$3,620
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,731,000</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$3,450,000</b>

**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**  
**Option 1.A: Pump to RCWSA WWTF, One Lift Station**

7/11/17

<b>PROJECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>	
Feasibility Study	\$15,000
GEFA Application Development	12,000
Design Engineering	224,000
Topographic Survey	20,000
Pumping Hydraulic Study	4,500
COE permits	7,000
Buffer Variance	7,000
Erosion Control Plans and Permits	7,000
Boundary Survey for Pump Station	5,000
Bid Phase Management	4,000
Engineering During Construction	30,000
Construction Observation	80,000
Easement Drawings	30,000
Acquisition	50,000
Funding Administration	15,000
Contingency	344,500
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$855,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS</b>	<b>\$4,305,000</b>

**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**

7/11/17

**Option 1.B: Pump to RCWSA WWTF, Two Lift Stations**

<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>				
Item	Units	Unit Cost	Qty	Cost
<b>SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM</b>				
8" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$50	10,600	\$530,000
12" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$70	4,750	\$332,500
Manhole	EA	\$2,700	65	\$175,500
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	140	\$11,200
J&B, 12" Sewer with 24" casing	LF	\$300	250	\$75,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	9,000	\$360,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	1,000	\$70,000
Sewer Service Lateral	EA	\$2,000	45	\$90,000
Septic Tank Abandonment	EA	\$1,000	45	\$45,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	15,000	\$19,500
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	5,900	\$8,260
NPDES	LS	\$2,040	1.0	\$2,040
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,719,000</b>
<b>SINGLE LIFT STATION - PUMP TO RCWSA WWTF</b>				
Pump Station	EA	\$400,000	2	\$800,000
6" Dia. Forcemain	LF	\$20	28,900	\$578,000
6" Plug Valve	EA	\$1,500	12	\$18,000
Air Release/Vacuum Valve	EA	\$4,000	15	\$60,000
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	60	\$4,800
J&B, 6" FM with 12" casing	LF	\$180	200	\$36,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	10,000	\$400,000
Gravel Road Repair	LF	\$10	3,100	\$31,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	2,000	\$140,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	28,600	\$37,180
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	15,500	\$21,700
NPDES	EA	\$3,620	1.0	\$3,620
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$2,130,300</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$3,849,300</b>

**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**  
**Option 1.B: Pump to RCWSA WWTF, Two Lift Stations**

7/11/17

<b>PROJECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>	
Feasibility Study	\$15,000
GEFA Application Development	12,000
Design Engineering	250,000
Topographic Survey	20,000
Pumping Hydraulic Study	4,500
COE permits	7,000
Buffer Variance	7,000
Erosion Control Plans and Permits	7,000
Boundary Survey for Pump Station	5,000
Bid Phase Management	4,000
Engineering During Construction	30,000
Construction Observation	80,000
Easement Drawings	30,000
Acquisition	50,000
Funding Administration	15,000
Contingency	385,200
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$921,700</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS</b>	<b>\$4,771,000</b>

**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**

11/7/17

**Option 2: On-Site Membrane Bioreactor and Reuse Land Application**

<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>				
Item	Units	Unit Cost	Qty	Cost
<b>SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM</b>				
8" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$50	10,600	\$530,000
12" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$70	4,750	\$332,500
Manhole	EA	\$2,700	65	\$175,500
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	140	\$11,200
J&B, 12" Sewer with 24" casing	LF	\$300	250	\$75,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	9,000	\$360,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	1,000	\$70,000
Sewer Service Lateral	EA	\$2,000	45	\$90,000
Septic Tank Abandonment	EA	\$1,000	45	\$45,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	15,000	\$19,500
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	5,900	\$8,260
NPDES	LS	\$2,040	1.0	\$2,040
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,719,000</b>
<b>LIFT STATION - PUMP TO SKY VALLEY WWTF</b>				
Pump Station	EA	\$400,000	1	\$400,000
4" Dia. Forcemain	LF	\$18	2,400	\$43,200
Air Release/Vacuum Valve	EA	\$4,000	2	\$8,000
J&B, 6" FM with 12" casing	LF	\$180	30	\$5,400
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	40	\$1,600
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	500	\$35,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	2,400	\$3,120
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	2,300	\$3,220
NPDES	EA	\$460	1.0	\$460
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$500,000</b>
<b>SKY VALLEY WWTF - MBR AND LAS</b>				
Mag Meter	EA	\$4,000	1	\$4,000
Coarse Screen	LS	\$30,000	1	\$30,000
Fine Screens	LS	\$162,000	1	\$162,000
Membrane Bioreactor	LS	\$750,000	1	\$750,000
Equalization Basin	CY	\$2,000	30	\$60,000
Reject Pond	CY	\$2,000	30	\$60,000
Lift Station	LS	\$130,000	1	\$130,000
Filtrate Storage Tank	LS	\$4,000	1	\$4,000
Turbidity Monitor	EA	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
UV Disinfection	LS	\$45,000	1	\$45,000
Chemical Dosing System	LS	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
Scada System	LS	\$25,000	1	\$25,000
Equipment Installation	LS	\$60,000	1	\$60,000
Sludge Digester	LS	\$100,000	1	\$100,000
Centrifuge	LS	\$230,000	1	\$230,000



**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**

11/7/17

**Option 2: On-Site Membrane Bioreactor and Reuse Land Application**

Storage Pond	LS	\$80,000	1	\$80,000
Effluent Pump Station	LS	\$130,000	1	\$130,000
Effluent Flow Measurement	LS	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
Automatic Diversion Valve	LS	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
Yard Piping	LS	\$30,000	1	\$30,000
Small Piping	LS	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
Building for Treatment System	LS	\$100,000	1	\$100,000
Miscellaneous Concrete	CY	\$800	40	\$32,000
Spare Parts and Sampling Equipment	LS	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
Backup Generator	EA	\$45,000	1	\$45,000
Electrical	EA	\$35,000	1	\$35,000
Sprayfield piping (93.8 acres)	LS	\$1,000,000	1	\$1,000,000
Sprayheads	EA	\$4,500	415	\$1,867,500
Erosion Control	LS	\$8,000	1	\$8,000
Grassing	LS	\$25,000	1	\$25,000
NPDES	EA	\$3,500	1.0	\$3,500
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$5,071,000</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$7,290,000</b>
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>				
Feasibility Study				\$15,000
GEFA Application Development				12,000
Design Engineering				474,000
Topographic Survey				20,000
Design Development Report				25,000
COE permits				7,000
Buffer Variance				7,000
Erosion Control Plans and Permits				7,000
Boundary Survey for Pump Station and Plant				5,000
Bid Phase Management				4,000
Engineering During Construction				30,000
Construction Observation				80,000
Easement Drawings				30,000
Acquisition				150,000
Funding Administration				15,000
Contingency				729,000
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,610,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS</b>				<b>\$8,900,000</b>

Exhibit 3:  
Phase Approach Cost Estimates

City of Sky Valley, Georgia  
Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study  
Preliminary Cost Estimate

7/21/17

Phased Cost Estimate: **Option 1.A: Pump to RCWSA WWTF, One Lift Station**

<b>PHASE 1</b>				
<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>				
Item	Units	Unit Cost	Qty	Cost
<b>SINGLE LIFT STATION - PUMP TO RCWSA WWTF</b>				
Pump Station	EA	\$30,000	1	\$30,000
6" Dia. Forcemain	LF	\$20	28,900	\$578,000
6" Plug Valve	EA	\$1,500	12	\$18,000
Forcemain Pig Access Port	EA	\$700	1	\$700
Air Release/Vacuum Valve	EA	\$4,000	15	\$60,000
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	60	\$4,800
J&B, 6" FM with 12" casing	LF	\$180	200	\$36,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	10,000	\$400,000
Gravel Road Repair	LF	\$10	3,100	\$31,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	2,000	\$140,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	28,600	\$37,180
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	15,500	\$21,700
NPDES	EA	\$3,620	1.0	\$3,620
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,361,000</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,361,000</b>
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>				
Feasibility Study				\$15,000
GEFA Application Development				12,000
Design Engineering				88,000
Topographic Survey				10,000
Pumping Hydraulic Study				4,500
COE permits				2,000
Erosion Control Plans and Permits				7,000
Boundary Survey for Pump Station				5,000
Bid Phase Management				4,000
Engineering During Construction				10,000
Construction Observation				15,000
Easement Drawings				5,000
Acquisition				10,000
Funding Administration				15,000
Contingency				136,500
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$339,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS</b>				<b>\$1,700,000</b>

**City of Sky Valley, Georgia**  
**Sanitary Sewer System Feasibility Study**  
**Preliminary Cost Estimate**

7/21/17

**Phased Cost Estimate: Option 1.A: Pump to RCWSA WWTF, One Lift Station**

<b>PHASE 2</b>				
<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>				
Item	Units	Unit Cost	Qty	Cost
<b>SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM</b>				
8" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$50	10,600	\$530,000
12" Dia. Gravity Sewer	LF	\$70	4,750	\$332,500
Manhole	EA	\$2,700	65	\$175,500
Minor Creek Crossing	LF	\$80	140	\$11,200
J&B, 12" Sewer with 24" casing	LF	\$300	250	\$75,000
Pavement Cut and Repair	LF	\$40	9,000	\$360,000
Trench Rock	CY	\$70	1,000	\$70,000
Sewer Service Lateral	EA	\$2,000	45	\$90,000
Septic Tank Abandonment	EA	\$1,000	45	\$45,000
Erosion Control	LF	\$1.30	15,000	\$19,500
Grassing	LF	\$1.40	5,900	\$8,260
NPDES	LS	\$2,040	1.0	\$2,040
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$1,719,000</b>
<b>SINGLE LIFT STATION - PUMP TO RCWSA WWTF</b>				
Pump Station	EA	\$350,000	1	\$350,000
<b>CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$350,000</b>
<b>TOTAL CONSTRUCTION SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$2,069,000</b>
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>				
GEFA Application Development				12,000
Design Engineering				134,000
Topographic Survey				15,000
COE permits				7,000
Buffer Variance				7,000
Erosion Control Plans and Permits				7,000
Bid Phase Management				4,000
Engineering During Construction				20,000
Construction Observation				70,000
Easement Drawings				25,000
Acquisition				40,000
Funding Administration				15,000
Contingency				207,000
<b>PROJECT SUPPORT SUB-TOTAL</b>				<b>\$563,000</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS</b>				<b>\$2,632,000</b>

## Departmental Report by the City Manager

December, 2017



### *Announcements -*

City Hall will be closed in observance of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day on Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup>. We will also be closed in observance of the New Year on Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> and Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup> in observance of MLK Day.

Garbage pick-up will be on the Tuesday after an observed Monday holiday. Thursday recycle pick-up will not be affected. If you need to dispose of garbage at any other time, the compactor is available on Knob Drive behind the postal facility to use at your convenience.

Tax bills have been mailed and are due by Wednesday, December 20, 2017. If you have not received your bill, please contact Alyssa Mullins at City Hall for a duplicate billing.

The January organizational meeting and council meeting has been set for January 2, 2018, at 10:00 AM.

### *Website - [www.skyvalleyga.com](http://www.skyvalleyga.com)*

Website – [www.skyvalleyga.com](http://www.skyvalleyga.com)

Our website is full of a variety of information for visitors and citizens. We have a visitor's guide with information on the area, and we also have the business side including meeting minutes ordinances, forms, permitting requirements, event information, contact information, etc. Last year we had over 34,000 unique visitors to the website. This year, we have had 31,303 unique visitors to the website, including 2,381 during the month of November.

### *E-Mail and Crisis Communication*

The City's e-mail distribution list is used frequently to keep everyone informed during inclement weather and for current events. This is our best way of staying connected with the residents. We currently have 479 e-mails for City News and another 1,012 for Event and Tourism Information. We also utilize a phone system for relaying urgent information. If you are not on these lists, please contact City Hall or sign up through the City's website home page.

### *Facebook - [www.facebook.com/skyvalleyga](http://www.facebook.com/skyvalleyga)*

The City's Facebook page has a total of 1,958 followers with 10 new followers added during the month of November. If you have not "liked" us on Facebook yet, please do and suggest our page to all of your Facebook friends. We share information, links, and many pictures on Facebook. We would love to have you share your favorite Sky Valley experiences and pictures on our page.



## *Visitor Center*

Last year we had the opportunity to welcome 2,241 visitors to the City of Sky Valley through our operations at the visitor center. So far, this year, we have greeted 1,723 people, including 86 during the month of November. Our longest distance travelers last month came from Texas, California, Maryland and Denmark.

## *Public Works -*

We are continuing our leaf collection service and will be working on clearing the leaves from the ditches. Please notify City Hall if you have blown your leaves into the ditch or have bagged leaves to pick up.

Please don't forget that any tree with a trunk that is 8" or more in diameter at 18" above the ground requires a permit for cutting, trimming & topping. If your tree is more than 8" in diameter (or 25" in circumference), it has qualified as a "tree" and will require a permit to cut, trim or top. If you had to obtain a permit to cut, it would not qualify for city chipping service. Contractors are responsible for the removal of all tree cuttings. Owners and contractors are both required to sign the permit application.

Please note that native shrubbery, trees and undergrowth such as mountain laurel, rhododendron, rare wildflowers, ferns, etc. are protected within the City of Sky Valley. Clear cutting or the removal of all trees or native vegetation is prohibited in excess of a 10' x 10' area without a permit.

You are allowed to remove limbs from a tree up to twelve feet above the ground without a permit. If you had to obtain a permit to cut, it would not qualify for city chipping service. Contractors are responsible for the removal of all tree cuttings and debris within fourteen days.

The City provides 15 minutes of chipping service to every homeowner each month at no cost. Chipping service is then provided at a rate of \$100/hour for any time exceeding the first 15 minutes. Cuttings must be less than 8" in diameter and must be stacked in one direction on the right-of-way, out of the road and not in an area that will block culverts or otherwise impede storm water drainage. We cannot chip small yard debris, vines, thorn bushes, small shrubbery clippings, railroad ties, landscape timbers, or similar type items. The chipping service is designed for limbs and small trees only. All other yard waste must be bagged.

## *City Park*

### **Walking Path**

The City Council has appropriated funds to lengthen the walking path in the park across from the mail facility. Construction of a bridge has been approved by the Council which will complete the loop.

### **Pickleball Courts**

Two Pickleball Courts have been completed for public use in the park adjacent to the mail facility. The Courts will be open from 8 AM until dark. Please wear court shoes and bring your own playing equipment and water bottles.

## **Pavilion**

The community pavilion and restrooms at the park between the mail facility and the pickleball courts have been completed and are now available for public use.

## *Police*

The Police Chief would like to remind everyone that the non-emergency number for the police department should not be used in the case of an emergency. Please call 911 so that all responding agencies can get the necessary information through the dispatch center without delay.

The police responded to 7 emergency 911 calls, assisted 22 residents, escorted 3 visitors and conducted 33 traffic stops resulting in 3 citations among the total 822 calls and requests for service. They also logged 3,311 miles patrolling the city.

## *Water -*

City Ordinance requires that all residences vacated during winter months shall be winterized to protect the plumbing from freezing. Under no circumstances may a water tap be left open to prevent freezing. Any vacated residence detected using water by the City will be assumed to have faulty plumbing and the City will turn off the water to prevent additional damage to the property and attempt to contact the property owner.

## *Sewer -*

The feasibility study for the sewer project has been completed and will be presented to Council and the public at the December meeting. This is a study prepared by Engineering Management Inc. and funded jointly by the City and Rabun County.

## *Solid Waste -*

Household garbage is picked up on Mondays and recycling on Thursdays unless otherwise posted. Please do not put garbage out on Thursday. If you need to dispose of garbage during the week, you are welcome to use the compactor on Knob Drive behind the postal facility.

Please note, if your underground cans are in disrepair, you will need to discontinue their use or replace them. We have a constant problem with untied bags and loose trash in the underground cans. If you are using an underground can, you should have a removable liner such as the one pictured here. If you do not have the liner that our garbage collectors can lift out of your underground can, you will need to discontinue use until replaced. This is for the safety of our garbage collectors.

Don't forget that garbage should not be placed out for pick-up any earlier than the morning of the service. Animals scatter garbage even when put in the underground cans. Our garbage collectors are not responsible for picking up any garbage that is not properly bagged once they arrive. The compactor at the tractor barn on Knob Drive can be utilized when you need to take your garbage somewhere prior to a garbage collection day. This is especially important when your garbage contains food items. NO garbage other than regular bagged household garbage should be put out by the road or in any dumpster or compactor.

Any contractors or residents found dumping lumber, carpeting, paint, furniture, appliances, or any other non-bagged household garbage in the dumpsters or compactor will be cited and fined up to \$1,000. Construction debris and other such items should be hauled to the transfer station on Boggs Mountain Road in Tiger.



## Reduce... Reuse... Recycle...

Reduce the amount and toxicity of trash you throw away

Reuse containers and products

Recycle as much as possible and buy products with recycled content

100 GENERAL FUND

Account	Description	Current Year				Variance	%
		Current Month	Current YTD	Budget			
Revenue							
310000	TAXES	4,419.65	1,061,921.55	1,065,650.00	-3,728.45	100	
320000	LICENSES & PERMITS	575.00	27,149.46	13,800.00	13,349.46	197	
330000	INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE	500.00	17,953.22	36,450.00	-18,496.78	49	
340000	CHARGES FOR SERVICES	205.00	8,572.62	10,600.00	-2,027.38	81	
350000	FINES & FORFEITS	1,098.02	4,624.35	8,000.00	-3,375.65	58	
360000	INVESTMENT INCOME	1,285.95	1,285.95	1,500.00	-214.05	86	
370000	CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS	-1,800.00	20,730.00	20,000.00	730.00	104	
380000	MISCELLANEOUS REVENUE	1,120.00	26,176.31	24,348.00	1,828.31	108	
	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>6,117.67</b>	<b>1,168,413.46</b>	<b>1,180,348.00</b>	<b>-11,934.54</b>	<b>99</b>	
Expenses							
411000	LEGISLATIVE		7,435.20	10,800.00	3,364.80	69	
413000	EXECUTIVE		2,504.13	3,500.00	995.87	72	
414000	ELECTIONS		351.92	4,790.00	4,438.08	7	
415000	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	12,946.31	189,668.61	217,440.00	27,771.39	87	
415650	GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS	4,115.37	43,046.20	52,260.00	9,213.80	82	
420000	JUDICIAL	176.47	3,365.64	4,915.00	1,549.36	68	
432000	POLICE	21,801.75	279,168.12	304,795.00	25,626.88	92	
435000	FIRE		32,012.50	61,225.00	29,212.50	52	
442000	ROADS	58,305.54	550,361.89	591,172.00	40,810.11	93	
461000	SPECIAL ACTIVITIES/EVENTS	3,029.18	23,361.55	30,000.00	6,638.45	78	
462000	PARKS	3,466.89	143,337.06	178,462.00	35,124.94	80	
470000	HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT	1,203.79	32,299.00	40,380.00	8,081.00	80	
475000	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	4,004.71	44,638.39	54,045.00	9,406.61	83	
490000	OTHER FINANCING USES			25,750.00	25,750.00		
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>109,050.01</b>	<b>1,351,550.21</b>	<b>1,579,534.00</b>	<b>227,983.79</b>	<b>86</b>	
Net Income from Operations			-102,932.34				
Other Revenue							
390000	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES		10,415.63	6,000.00	4,415.63	174	
	<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>10,415.63</b>	<b>6,000.00</b>	<b>4,415.63</b>	<b>174</b>	
Net Income			-102,932.34				

12/05/17  
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CITY OF SKY VALLEY  
Income Statements Summarized  
For the Accounting Period: 11 / 17

Page: 2 of 4  
Report ID: LBI70ASI

275 HOTEL/MOTEL TAX

Account	Description	Current Year				%
		Current Month	Current YTD	Budget	Variance	
Revenue						
310000 TAXES		2,007.57	15,461.55	10,000.00	5,461.55 155	
360000 INVESTMENT INCOME			5.53		5.53	
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>2,007.57</b>	<b>15,467.08</b>	<b>10,000.00</b>	<b>5,467.08 155</b>	
Expenses						
490000 OTHER FINANCING USES				4,000.00	4,000.00	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>4,000.00</b>	<b>4,000.00</b>	
	Net Income from Operations	2,007.57	15,467.08			
	Net Income	2,007.57	15,467.08			



12/05/17  
10:33:03

CITY OF SKY VALLEY  
Income Statements Summarized  
For the Accounting Period: 11 / 17

Page: 3 of 4  
Report ID: LB170AS1

505 WATER FUND

Account	Description	Current Year			%
		Current Month	Current YTD	Budget	
Revenue					
340000	CHARGES FOR SERVICES	33,482.26	366,415.63	389,900.00	-23,484.37 94
360000	INVESTMENT INCOME		762.44	1,000.00	-237.56 76
	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>33,482.26</b>	<b>367,178.07</b>	<b>390,900.00</b>	<b>-23,721.93 94</b>
Expenses					
444000	WATER	14,092.83	285,708.71	405,900.00	120,191.29 70
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>14,092.83</b>	<b>285,708.71</b>	<b>405,900.00</b>	<b>120,191.29 70</b>
	Net Income from Operations	19,389.43	81,469.36		
	Net Income	19,389.43	81,469.36		

12/05/17  
10:33:03

CITY OF SKY VALLEY  
Income Statements Summarized  
For the Accounting Period: 11 / 17

Page: 4 of 4  
Report ID: LB170AS1

545 SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING

Account	Description	Current Year			%
		Current Month	Current YTD	Budget	
Revenue					
340000	CHARGES FOR SERVICES	16,227.00	177,807.22	193,200.00	-15,392.78 92
	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>16,227.00</b>	<b>177,807.22</b>	<b>193,200.00</b>	<b>-15,392.78 92</b>
Expenses					
445000	SOLID WASTE & RECYCLING	10,106.49	127,386.56	193,200.00	65,813.44 66
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>10,106.49</b>	<b>127,386.56</b>	<b>193,200.00</b>	<b>65,813.44 66</b>
	Net Income from Operations	6,120.51	50,420.66		
	Net Income	6,120.51	50,420.66		

**POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY LOG**

INCIDENT	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2017 YTD	2016	2015	2014
													Incomplete Data	Incomplete Data	Complete	
Fire	0	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	7	6	4	10
Medical Emergency	9	6	3	3	5	3	4	5	5	4	1	1	48	52	21	35
Vehicle Accident	0	0	0	0	2	1	4	2	3	0	1	1	13	19	13	7
Family Violence	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	2	1
Fight/Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1
Death/Suicide	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	4	2	0	3
Missing Person	6	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	10	6	2	6
Burglary/Break-In	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	1	1
Theft	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	3	4
Suspicious Activity	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4	0	0	10	8	14	26
Suspicious Person	0	0	0	0	6	4	0	3	1	0	3	3	17	7	3	4
Suspicious Vehicle	3	0	2	0	6	4	0	2	3	2	2	2	24	10	5	24
Alarm	0	4	3	1	3	3	1	0	1	0	4	4	20	23	0	12
Investigation	13	5	5	7	4	6	9	4	1	3	4	4	61	162	0	3
DUI/Public Drunk	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Drug Related	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Juvenile	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Traffic Control	3	2	3	2	5	7	7	9	2	3	2	2	45	41	20	14
Traffic Stop	6	5	2	3	8	7	20	21	10	2	33	33	117	189	31	19
Mutual Aid	3	6	3	5	6	5	1	8	1	1	1	1	40	45	9	38
Animal	1	1	8	2	16	18	24	45	9	4	5	5	133	117	30	29
Lost & Found	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	18	0	6
Complaint	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	1	1	6	3	13	16
City Ord. Violation	1	3	0	0	1	0	1	3	0	1	0	0	10	8	1	2
Resident Assist	51	16	13	9	20	16	25	13	20	22	22	22	227	312	16	18
Residence Check	679	526	409	384	315	299	367	344	447	462	512	512	4744	1299	36	0
Business Check	166	162	211	236	180	255	290	257	246	205	184	184	2392	820	0	0
Welfare Check	35	32	23	14	19	11	8	3	10	0	10	10	165	90	9	11
Visitor Escort	13	4	5	5	4	4	6	6	4	9	3	3	63	190	22	34
Vehicle Assist	6	3	0	4	5	1	6	5	4	5	0	0	39	80	36	70
Arrests	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	4	8	1	5
Warnings	3	7	0	2	5	7	16	14	11	2	30	30	97	121	4	3
Citations	3	0	0	1	0	2	1	4	0	0	3	3	14	93	3	9
Total Calls	1006	787	693	679	613	657	801	753	780	729	822	822	8320	3748	140	561
911 Calls	10	12	8	4	14	9	4	5	9	6	7	7	88	69	0	90
Mileage	4049	3269	3253	3756	3805	3447	3672	3935	3359	3271	3311	3311	39127	34929	18152	37039

<b>Housing &amp; Development Departmental Data Report</b>	<b>For month ending November 30, 2017</b>		
	<b>Nov-17</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>2016 YTD</b>
New Residential & Commercial permits issued	0	1	1
All other addition, remodel and repair permits	17	118	116
Certificates of Occupancy issued	0	1	0
Total New Construction not yet finalized	0		0
Total Other Construction not yet finalized	7		7
Notices to Comply issued	0	0	0
Stop Work Orders issued	0	0	0
Tree Cutting permits issued	6	88	106
Code & Ordinance Violations cited	0	0	0
<b>Fees Collected</b>			
	<b>Nov-17</b>	<b>YTD</b>	<b>2016 YTD</b>
New Residential or Commercial Permits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Addition, Remodel, Repair Permits	\$450.00	\$4,150.00	\$6,472.22
Tree Cutting Permits	\$0.00	\$3,080.00	\$4,240.00
Land Disturbing Permits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Fines Collected for Ordinance Violations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,100.00

<b>Totals Report For 2014 Taxes November 2017 Tax Commissioner</b>				
	Billed	Collected	Adjustments	Outstanding
2014 Ad Valorem Tax	953,344.25	948,356.10	4,890.29-	97.86
Interest	1793.28	1767.17	0	26.11
Penalty	1387.45	1377.66	0	9.79
Costs	940.00	918.00	0	22.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>957,464.98</b>	<b>952,418.93</b>	<b>4890.29-</b>	<b>155.76</b>

**Collected: 99.98 %**

<b>Totals Report For 2015 Taxes November 2017 Tax Commissioner</b>				
	Billed	Collected	Adjustments	Outstanding
2015 Ad Valorem Tax	945099.76	944,848.33	467.14+	718.57
Interest	2230.24	2105.02	0	125.22
Penalty	1627.68	1555.83	0	71.85
Costs	4036.00	3640.00	0	396.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>952,993.68</b>	<b>952,149.18</b>	<b>467.14+</b>	<b>1311.64</b>

**Collected: 99.92%**

<b>Totals Report For 2016 Taxes November 2017 Tax Commissioner</b>				
	Billed	Collected	Adjustments	Outstanding
2016 Ad Valorem Tax	943,040.34	939,934.63	(-2,626.45)	479.26
Interest	1054.01	1022.92		31.09
Penalty	414.93	397.07		17.86
Costs	7150.31	6071.38		1078.93
<b>Totals</b>	<b>951,659.59</b>	<b>947,426.00</b>	<b>(-2,626.45)</b>	<b>1607.14</b>

**Collected: 99.94%**

<b>Totals Report For 2017 Taxes November 2017 Tax Commissioner</b>				
	Billed	Collected	Adjustments	Outstanding
2017 Ad Valorem Tax	942,962.54	303,810.82	+845.30	639,997.02
Interest				
Penalty				
Costs				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>942,962.54</b>	<b>303,810.82</b>	<b>+845.30</b>	<b>639,997.02</b>

**Collected 32%**

November 13, 2017

The Clayton Tribune  
PO Box 425  
Clayton, GA 30525

Please place the following notice in the legal section of your paper, November 16, 2017.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
PURSUANT TO O.C.G.A. 36-66-4(a)**

The City of Sky Valley will conduct a public hearing to receive comment on a proposed ordinance to establish standards for the protection of trees and native plants within the City of Sky Valley. The public hearing for the consideration of this ordinance will be held at a meeting of the Sky Valley City Council on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2017, at 10:00 A.M., at the CBC Lodge, 696 Sky Valley Way, Sky Valley, Georgia. At the hearing, any interested parties may present data, make statements or offer viewpoints or arguments either orally or in writing. Statements shall be concise to afford all an opportunity to be heard. Draft copies of the proposed ordinance are available at the office of the Clerk of the City of Sky Valley.

This 13<sup>th</sup> day of December 2017.

For the Mayor and Council of the City of Sky Valley by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ella Fast  
City Clerk



# ORDINANCE HIGHLIGHTS

## TREES AND NATIVE PLANTS



### Permits Not Required

1. Maintenance Pruning/Trimming (not including the reduction in total height of the tree)
2. Crown Thinning (cutting windows within the tree canopy without a reduction of the total height)

### Permits Required without Mitigation (Replanting)

1. Crown Reduction also known as drop-crotch pruning (replaces “topping”)
2. Removal of Dead/Hazardous/Diseased Trees (no fee required)
3. Thinning of Tree Density (up to half of a stand density around a controlling point)
4. Thinning or Removal of Native Shrubbery including Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel and Azalea that measures five (5) or more feet in height when at least one native shrub will remain within a 10' x 10' area being thinned or the native shrubbery is within the suggested Firewise defensible space of 30-feet from a structure.

### Permits Required with Mitigation at 25% of Total Inches Removed

1. Healthy Tree Removal 8” or more in diameter at 4.5 feet above ground that does not qualify for Thinning of Tree Density
2. Specimen Trees including hardwood or softwood trees with a DBH of 24” or more and flowering trees, including Dogwood, Redbud and Sourwood with DBH of 10” or more.

### Permits Required with Mitigation at 100% of Total Quantity Removed

1. Native Shrubbery including native Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel and Azalea that measures five (5) or more feet in height that does not qualify for thinning and is not within the Firewise defensible space of 30-feet from a structure.

### Permitting Procedure

1. Any landowner in the City of Sky Valley wanting to reduce the crown or height of a tree, cut a tree 8” or more DBH, thin a stand of trees, remove a dead, diseased or hazardous tree or remove protected Native Plants/Shrubbery or Specimen Trees must first complete an application for a tree cutting permit on forms designated by the City of Sky Valley and file said application with the office of the City Clerk.
2. The application process shall include the following:
  - a. City's application form
  - b. Mitigation Plan (if required)
  - c. Tree Removal Contact name, phone and insurance information.
  - d. Application fee (if required)
  - e. Identification by applicant of trees or shrubs to be removed with a sketch and by physically marking each with a colored ribbon
  - f. Cutting or removing trees on another person's land will require a signed written permission from that landowner to be sent to City Hall before a permit will be issued

- g. The owner/applicant and the contractor, if any, must acknowledge the requirements of the Ordinance.
- h. The City Code Enforcement Officer shall within ten (10) working days of the filing of the application visit the property, confirm that the application is complete and make a written recommendation to the city manager that a permit be issued, modified or denied.
- i. The City Manager shall within five (5) business days of receipt of the recommendation of the City Code Enforcement Officer approve, disapprove, or approve in part the recommendation.

#### Final Inspection

1. The Owner or Licensed Contractor doing the work is responsible for making sure that all tree cuttings are removed within 14 days of cutting and for calling the City Code Enforcement Officer for a final inspection within said 14-day period to avoid penalties.
2. Tree cuttings authorized under this permit are not eligible to be left out for the City's chipping service. Tree cuttings that a homeowner desires to keep as firewood may be approved at the reasonable discretion of the Code Enforcement Officer if such cuttings are of a typical fire log size and stacked near the home in such a manner as to be practically used for such a purpose.

#### Appeals

1. Any applicant dissatisfied with the recommendation of the Code Enforcement Officer or the decision of the City Manager may appeal such recommendation or decision to the City Council of the City of Sky Valley provided such appeal shall be in writing and filed with the City Clerk within 10 business days of receipt of the decision of the City Manager.

\* This is a brief summary of the regulations regarding trees and native shrubbery within the City of Sky Valley. Please refer to the Ordinance for complete descriptions, definitions, and requirements.

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**AN ORDINANCE TO REPEAL SKY VALLEY ORDINANCES 12-01 and 14-06  
AND TO ESTABLISH A NEW ORDINANCE  
FOR THE PROTECTION OF TREES AND NATIVE PLANTS  
WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS OF SKY VALLEY**

WHEREAS, trees provide important environmental and aesthetic benefits to the people and guests of the City of Sky Valley which extend beyond the boundaries of the property on which they grow; and

WHEREAS, trees impact real estate values throughout the community;

WHEREAS, trees provide important health benefits to the citizens and guests of the City of Sky Valley which extend beyond the boundaries of the property on which they grow;

WHEREAS, large trees are a resource which cannot reasonably be fully replaced if injured, damaged, or removed;

WHEREAS, the City of Sky Valley believes that trees are essential to maintaining the quality of life that we enjoy in our community and in creating a valuable natural legacy for future generations;

WHEREAS, the City of Sky Valley recognizes the most important role of government is the protection of its citizens' safety and welfare, and that trees and other vegetation may present both fall danger and fire danger if not managed and properly controlled;

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that the impact of any tree to the road right-of-way and neighboring properties should be considered when considering the issuance of tree removal permits;

WHEREAS, the City of Sky Valley recognizes that from time to time property owners want or need to remove trees;

WHEREAS, the City of Sky Valley understands and appreciates that the attainment and preservation of dramatic mountain views is a major consideration for many property owners, and that fact will be given due consideration in the permitting process; and

WHEREAS, the City of Sky Valley finds that because of environmental and aesthetic concerns it is in the public interest of the citizens of Sky Valley to protect trees by imposing certain restrictions on pruning and the removal of trees.

NOW THEREFORE, The Council of the City of Sky Valley hereby ordains:

## Section 1. Intent.

This tree ordinance shall apply to property or portions thereof located within the corporate limits of Sky Valley, Georgia. The Mayor and Council find, based upon information presented through public input and during public hearings that (1) the protection and preservation of trees; (2) the planting of new trees and other landscape material; and (3) buffers between dissimilar uses serve a legitimate and valuable purpose and provide for the public health and general welfare of the citizens of Sky Valley, Georgia.

## Section 2. Purpose.

Trees are important for shading and cooling, reducing noise and wind, for preventing soil erosion, protecting water quality, producing oxygen, dust filtration, fostering air quality through carbon dioxide absorption, protecting wildlife habitat, and contributing to the aesthetic and economic value of real property.

Consistent with the above, the purpose of the tree ordinance is to preserve and enhance Sky Valley's natural environment. This purpose will be accomplished through the preservation, protection and planting of trees and other landscape material.

## Section 3.

The City of Sky Valley in enacting this ordinance recognizes that there is presently no property in Sky Valley used for timber harvesting, commercial agriculture purposes, plant or tree nurseries, orchards, trees in active commercial operation, botanical gardens, or other commercial purposes. The City further recognizes that the zoning ordinance of the City of Sky Valley provides for commercial and retail operations in the Commercial and Municipal district. The zoning ordinance of the City of Sky Valley provides for permitted and conditional uses and provides a procedure for a use not listed or itemized to be permitted. In the event a conditional use is allowed or permitted for the purposes enumerated herein, the City of Sky Valley will determine the application of this tree ordinance under the intended purpose and may conditionally modify the application of this tree ordinance consistent with the intent of this tree ordinance to accommodate any such commercial use.

## Section 4. Definitions.

The following definitions are applicable to this ordinance:

- (1) Clear-cutting - Removal of all merchantable trees and vegetation from a selected area.
- (2) Crown – The crown is made up of the leaves and branches at the top of a tree.
- (3) Crown Reduction – The reduction in height of the Crown.
- (4) Crown Thinning - The selective removal of branches to reduce Crown density. This promotes better form and health by increasing light penetration and air movement. Strong emphasis is on removing weak

branches. Crown Thinning does not alter the overall size or shape of the tree.

- (5) Diameter at Breast Height (DBH) – The circumference of a tree measure around the tree at 4.5 feet above the ground divided by 3.14.
- (6) Drop Crotch Pruning – Shortening branches or the trunk by pruning back to a lateral branch (crotch).
- (7) Footprint – Includes the area covered by any approved building and permitted dwelling or commercial business plus 20 feet from the edges of the approved structure and 15 feet from the driveway and parking area. The footprint will further include the septic tank location and leach field.
- (8) Hardwood Tree - Trees with broad, flat leaves as opposed to coniferous or needled trees. Wood hardness varies among the hardwood species. Common hardwood in the region include oak, elm, maple, hickory, birch, beech, locust, poplar and cherry.
- (9) Hazardous Tree – A tree that is at risk for failure because it is dead or structurally defective, in a location where that failure could result in personal injury or property damage.
- (10) Maintenance Pruning – Regular selective pruning is a way to keep woody plants healthy and productive. One aim of maintenance pruning is to protect your woody plants from pests and disease, which can gain entry into a plant through dead wood, broken branches, and wounds caused by branches that are rubbing together. By thoughtfully cutting back tips, branches, limbs, and stems, you can also encourage youthful growth that produces abundant flowers and fruits as well as prevent the spread of pests and disease. Maintenance Pruning does not include Crown Reduction for trees.
- (11) Mitigation – The planting of new trees and/or shrubs on a parcel to replace those removed.
- (12) Mountain Protection District - The Mountain Protection District - Comprised of all land area within the jurisdiction of Sky Valley, Georgia, that is 2,200 feet or more above mean sea level that has a percentage slope of 25 percent or greater for at least 500-feet horizontally.
- (13) Native Plants and Shrubbery – Plants and Shrubbery that measure five (5) or more feet in height that are naturally occurring in the region. For purposes of this ordinance, this only includes native Rhododendron, Mountain Laurel and Azalea.
- (14) Permit – The official document issued by the City authorizing work to be completed which is subject to this ordinance.
- (15) Replacement Trees/Shrubs – Approved trees and shrubs may be used for mitigation. Replacement Trees may be no less than 1-inch in caliper. 15-gallon nursery grown trees shall be considered equivalent to 1-inch for mitigation purposes. Replacement Shrubs may be no less than 3 gallons each in size. One 3-gallon nursery grown shrub shall be equivalent to 1/2-inch for mitigation purposes.



- (16) Site Plan – A simple drawing of a property as seen from above including owner's name, site address, property boundary lines, structures, driveway, and location, DBH and species (if known) of each tree requested for removal.
- (17) Specimen Tree – Hardwood or softwood tree with a DBH of 24" or more and flowering trees, including but not limited to, Dogwood, Redbud and Sourwood with DBH of 10" or more.
- (18) Softwood - Softwood or Coniferous trees are usually evergreen, bear cones, and have needles or scale-like leaves. Common softwoods in the region include Pine, Fir, Cedar, Hemlock and Spruce.
- (19) Street Tree – Tree planted in or adjacent to the road right-of-way.
- (20) Thinning – The selective removal of certain trees from a stand to regulate the number, quality, and distribution of the remaining trees. Deliberate control of stand density by thinning can improve vigor, growth rate and quality of the remaining trees. Thinning also allows for planting of suitable understory plants.
- (21) Topping – The removal of large portions of the crown of the tree by the making of horizontal cuts, generally through the main stem.
- (22) Tree – Any tree that measures eight (8) or more inches in diameter at Diameter at Breast Height (DBH).
- (23) Vista Pruning – Selective removal or reduction of branches in the tree's crown to allow a specific view of an object from a predetermined point.

## Section 5. Pruning

- (1) Maintenance Pruning
  - (a) Maintenance Pruning is permissible without a permit.
  - (b) Maintenance Pruning does not include Crown Reduction.
- (2) Vista Pruning
 

The two main techniques that are used when vista pruning are crown reduction and crown thinning.

  - (a) Crown Reduction (reducing the height or spread of a tree)
    - 1. Crown Reduction (also known as drop-crotch pruning) may be used to enhance or maintain a view or to reduce the size of a tree that has grown too large for its permitted space. This procedure removes the end of a branch or top of the trunk by cutting back to a "crotch" created by a lateral (side) branch.
    - 2. Crown Reduction requires a permit.
    - 3. For permit approval, there must be a strong side branch along the main stem or trunk that can assume the terminal control over the tree. Portions of the tree above that point may be removed to reduce the height and spread of the tree.
    - 4. Topping is considered an inappropriate pruning technique and is not permitted.

- (b) Crown Thinning a tree may also be used to enhance or maintain a view. The primary guideline for vista pruning by crown thinning is to provide the homeowner with "windows" that occur within the tree canopy. Crown Thinning does not require a permit.

Section 6. Tree Removal – Removal of Dead/Hazardous/Diseased Trees

- (1) Removal of Dead/Hazardous/Diseased Trees is permissible with a permit. No application fee will be required.
  - (a) Hazardous trees shall include, but not be limited to, those that are within the footprint as defined herein.
  - (b) If tree(s) are dead, hazardous, or diseased, a permit for their removal will be issued by the City upon written request and verification by the City Code Enforcement Officer or his/her designee.
  - (c) If there is a disagreement regarding the validity of the tree(s) being dead, hazardous, or diseased, a statement from a certified arborist may be required.
- (2) Emergency Removal
  - (a) In case of an emergency caused by a tree being in a hazardous or dangerous condition posing an immediate threat to person or property, such tree may be removed without a permit if notification of such an emergency is made to the Sky Valley Police Department prior to the removal.

Section 7. Tree Removal – Thinning of density

- (1) Thinning trees is the removal of certain trees (including specimen trees) from a stand to regulate the number, quality, and distribution of the remaining trees. Deliberate control of stand density by thinning can improve the vigor, growth rate and quality of the remaining trees. Thinning will also allow space for planting of suitable understory plants.
- (2) Thinning by removal may be considered by evaluating size, species and the effect the intended removal will impact the area. Thinning by removal requires a tree cutting permit.
- (3) No mitigation is required for approved thinning.
- (4) No more than one half (1/2) of a stand density around any tree within the minimum spacing radius will be considered for removal within a two-year period.
- (5) Spacing criteria to be considered in evaluating a tree removal permit application for thinning a stand density.

DBH - Minimum spacing between trees of like or greater size

8 – 11 inches	20 feet
12 – 15 inches	25 feet
16 – 19 inches	30 feet
20 + inches	40 feet

For example, the largest tree in a stand will be the controlling point. If you had a 20" DBH tree, a radius of 40 feet would be drawn around it. Up to one half (1/2) of the trees less than or equal to 20" would be considered for removal within that

40 feet.

#### Section 8. Healthy Tree Removal

- (1) The removal of any other healthy tree 8" DBH or greater that does not meet the thinning criteria and is not otherwise considered dead, diseased or hazardous will be considered following the Code Enforcement Officer's review of the tree cutting permit application, site plan and mitigation plan. The following factors will be reviewed and be the basis for granting or denying the requested permit.
  - (a) Whether the trees intended for removal are within the Mountain Protection District, and if so, if a reforestation plan has been submitted;
  - (b) Whether the trees intended for removal are Specimen trees;
  - (c) Whether the trees intended for removal will impact erosion in the area;
  - (d) Whether the retention of the trees is necessary to prevent excess water runoff;
  - (e) The condition of the trees with respect to danger or interference with any structures on the property.
  - (f) The number and types of trees on the lot. No clear-cut openings in the existing tree canopy will be permitted without a well-distributed stand of trees or other adequate vegetative buffer being left between the adjoining property owners or the road right-of-way.
  - (g) The contribution of the trees to the natural beauty of the area;
  - (h) The effect of removal or relocation on property values in the area;
  - (i) The necessity, or lack thereof, to remove the trees to allow reasonable economic use and enjoyment of the property;
  - (j) The impact of any tree on the right-of-way;
  - (k) Whether the construction of structures or improvements on any property would necessitate the removal of any trees.
- (2) The value of healthy trees removed will be determined by adding the total DBH of all trees authorized for removal by the permit.
- (3) Mitigation (replanting) will be required for all healthy tree cutting permits as defined in this section.
  - (a) Required mitigation of healthy trees will be equal to 25% in inches of the total value DBH as determined by the Code Enforcement Officer.
  - (b) Mitigation will require replanting of Replacement Trees/Shrubs.
  - (c) All proposed Replacement Trees/Shrubs shall generally conform to the official Recommended Plant List of suitable plant types, which shall be maintained in the office of the City Clerk. Approved plants need not match specific plants in the list, but the plants shall follow the parameters defined by the list.
  - (d) Replacement or planting of street trees:
    - a. Must be evaluated based on estimated size at full maturity;
    - b. Must provide at least eight (8) feet of clearance at maturity for pedestrians and vehicles to avoid hazards created by low hanging tree branches;
    - c. Must be planted at least twenty (20) feet from the edge of roadway;
    - d. Must not impede safety or line-of-sight or interfere with lane of travel;
    - e. Must be of horticulturally appropriate species for use in road frontage areas;
  - (e) Replacement trees must be planted within the 90 days of the tree removal

- unless otherwise approved by the Code Enforcement Officer;
- (f) Replacement trees shall be planted on the same property unless otherwise approved by the Code Enforcement Officer.
- (g) If the replacement tree dies within two (2) years, it shall be replaced by the property owner with a tree of equal value.
- (h) If replacement trees are not planted within ninety (90) days or such date otherwise approved by the Code Enforcement Officer, the property owner will be in violation of their permit and will be subject to penalties as provided herein.

#### Section 9. Protected Native Shrubbery and Specimen Trees.

- (1) It shall be the policy of the City of Sky Valley that Native Shrubbery and Specimen Trees shall be preserved insofar as practical and reasonable in order to retard surface runoff and soil erosion and, protect their native species.
- (2) The removal of Native Shrubbery and Specimen Trees may be permitted on a limited basis as follows:
  - (a) With a permit as necessary for placing public roads, utilities, structures and parking areas; or
  - (b) With a permit for minimal selective cutting of Native Shrubbery or Specimen Trees.
  - (c) Selective removal permits will be evaluated based on the following criteria:
    - a. Overall condition of tree or plant;
    - b. How removal will impact erosion in the area;
    - c. How removal will impact water runoff;
    - d. The density of native plants or specimen trees on the lot;
    - e. The contribution of the Native Shrubbery or Specimen Trees to the natural beauty of the area;
    - f. The necessity, or lack thereof, to remove the Native Shrubbery or Specimen Trees to allow reasonable economic use and enjoyment of the property;
    - g. The impact of any Native Shrubbery or Specimen Trees on the right-of-way;
    - h. The buffer left between the adjoining property owner or the road right-of-way; and
    - i. Reasonable wildfire protection of structures under Sky Valley's Firewise guidelines.
  - (d) Maintenance Pruning is permitted without a permit.
  - (e) Approval of a permit for minimal selective cutting or removal of Native Shrubbery will require mitigation unless there is at least one native shrub to remain within a 10' x 10' area being thinned or the native shrubbery is within the suggested Firewise defensible space of 30-feet from a structure.
  - (f) Approval of a permit for minimal selective cutting or removal of Specimen Trees will require mitigation unless it falls within the Thinning of Density guidelines set forth in Section 7.

- (g) Mitigation (replanting) will be required for selective cutting and removal of all healthy native shrubbery and specimen tree permits as defined in this section.
- a. Required mitigation for Specimen Trees will be equal to replacement of 25% in inches of the total value DBH determined by the Code Enforcement Officer with Replacement Trees/Shrubs as defined herein.
  - b. Required mitigation for Native Shrubby will be equal to replacement of 100% of the total quantity of native shrubs cut as determined by the Code Enforcement Officer. Native shrubs may be replaced with Replacement Trees/Shrubs as defined herein.
  - c. All proposed plants shall generally conform to the official Recommended Plant List of suitable plant types, which shall be maintained in the office of the City Clerk. Approved plants need not match specific plants in the list, but the plants shall follow the parameters defined by the list.

#### Section 10. Final Inspection.

- (1) The Owner or Licensed Contractor doing the work is responsible for making sure that all tree cuttings are removed within 14 days of cutting and for calling the City Code Enforcement Officer for a final inspection within said 14-day period to avoid penalties.
- (2) Tree cuttings authorized under this permit are not eligible to be left out for the City's chipping service. Tree cuttings that a homeowner desires to keep as firewood may be approved at the reasonable discretion of the Code Enforcement Officer if such cuttings are of a typical fire log size and stacked near the home in such a manner as to be practically used for such a purpose.

#### Section 11. Procedure for Issuance of a Tree Cutting Permit.

- (1) Any landowner in the City of Sky Valley wanting to reduce the crown or height of a tree, cut a tree 8" or more DBH, thin a stand of trees, remove a dead, diseased or hazardous tree or remove protected Native Plants/Shrubbery or Specimen Trees must first complete an application for a tree cutting permit on forms designated by the City of Sky Valley and file said application with the office of the City Clerk.
- (2) The application shall include the following:
  - Owner and Applicant, name, phone and signature.
  - Site Address
  - Site Plan/Sketch identifying property boundaries
  - Location of driveway, house and other structures
  - Location, DBH (measured at 4.5' above grade), and species of all trees on the property requested for removal. Each tree must be shown in correlation to the property line, buildings and driveway.
  - Reason for removal
  - Mitigation Plan (except in the case of selective thinning of a densely wooded lot or the removal of dead, hazardous and diseased trees) to include location of replacement trees



Tree Removal Contact name, phone and insurance information.

- (3) Tree Cutters that perform work within the city must be insured with liability and workers' compensation insurance unless the homeowner signs an affidavit of responsibility for any damages.
- (4) All permit applications must be accompanied where required with the application fee.
- (5) In order to identify tree by location the applicant must, prior to submitting the application, mark each tree by placing a colored ribbon around the circumference of the tree at approximately 3 to 4 feet off the ground.
- (6) Cutting or removing trees on another person's land will require a signed written permission from that landowner to be sent to City Hall before a permit will be issued.
- (7) The owner must certify familiarity with the terms of this ordinance and the applicant must certify the person or business entity cutting and removing trees is familiar with the ordinance.
- (8) The City Code Enforcement Officer shall within ten (10) working days of the filing of the application (unless a longer time is agreed by the applicant) visit the property, confirm that the application is complete and make a written recommendation to the city manager that a permit be issued, modified or denied.
- (9) The City Manager shall within five (5) business days of receipt of the recommendation of the City Code Enforcement Officer approve, disapprove, or approve in part the recommendation. If the city manager approves in part or disapproves the recommendation of the Code Enforcement Officer, written explanation outlining the reasons for approval in part or disapproval must be given.

#### Section 12. Permit Fees.

Fees charged by the City for tree cutting permits shall be established from time to time by duly enacted ordinances of the City of Sky Valley or by an appropriate resolution of the City of Sky Valley.

#### Section 13. Appeal.

- (1) Any applicant dissatisfied with the recommendation of the Code Enforcement Officer or the decision of the City Manager may appeal such recommendation or decision to the City Council of the City of Sky Valley provided such appeal shall be in writing and filed with the City Clerk within 10 business days of receipt of the decision of the City Manager.
- (2) If an appeal as provided for in the section filed with the City Clerk 14 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the City of Sky Valley such appeal shall be placed on the agenda for consideration at that meeting.
- (3) If the appeal is filed less than 14 days prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the City Council, the appeal will be placed on the next following agenda or it may be placed on an agenda for a called meeting if one is scheduled prior to the regular City Council meeting date.
- (4) The City Council, in considering an appeal, will hear from the applicant, the City Code Enforcement Officer, the City Manager, and other persons who may wish

to provide information to the City Council. In making a decision, the City Council will be governed at all time by the criteria outlined in this ordinance.

#### Section 14. Penalties for Violation.

- (1) Except as otherwise provided herein, any violation of this ordinance shall subject the applicant and the contractor each to a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per violation and \$1,000 for each additional violation.
- (2) A violation will occur for each tree or protected native plant that is cut, pruned, topped, or removed in violation of this ordinance.
- (3) In addition to the above monetary fine any person, firm, corporation or other entity or agents thereof violating this ordinance will be required to replace each tree or protected native plant that is cut, pruned, topped, or removed in violation of this ordinance with two (2) hardwoods, softwoods or native flowering trees or shrubs as provided herein.
  - (a) Each tree/shrub must be:
    1. At a minimum, equivalent in size to a 15-gallon nursery grown tree; and
    2. Approved by the Code Enforcement Officer prior to planting.
- (4) A failure to remove any trees cut or debris from trees topped or trimmed within 14 days of completion will be considered a violation of this ordinance with a fine up to \$100 per day. The fine shall continue for each day the cut trees or debris remains on the property.
- (5) All citations issued and fines imposed herein can be imposed individually or jointly upon the Applicant, Property Owner and the Contractor depending on the situation.
- (6) If the City Code Enforcement Officer determines that a proper permit was not obtained or more vegetation was cut than what was included on the approved permit, the City Manager and Property Owner shall be notified.
  - (a) If both the City Code Enforcement Officer and City Manager agree that if proper procedures would have been followed, the application would have been approved, the Property Owner shall pay a penalty to the City equal to double the normal permit fee (as provided in the current fee schedule) for the total number of trees that were improperly pruned, cut or removed.
  - (b) The Property Owner shall have ten (10) days from the date of the notice to pay the penalty and avoid a citation.
- (7) No consideration will be given to a property owner's claim of dead, diseased or hazardous trees if those trees are cut and removed without a proper permit and without verification by the City.
- (8) In the case of an after-hours emergency which would involve the cutting of a tree, the City Police Department should be contacted to verify the hazard and make a report for the City Code Enforcement Officer.
- (9) In an emergency situation that has been verified by the Police, no penalty shall be assessed.

Section 15.

SHOULD ANY SECTION OR PROVISION OF THIS ORDINANCE BE DECLARED BY A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION TO BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL OR INVALID SUCH DECLARATION SHALL NOT AFFECT THE VALIDITY OF THE ORDINANCE AS A WHOLE OR ANY PART THEREOF OTHER THAN THE PART SO DECLARED TO BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL OR INVALID. ALL RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES AND PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE ARE HEREBY REPEALED.

Section 16.

THIS ORDINANCE WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE UPON ADOPTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND APPROVED BY THE MAYOR AS PROVIDED BY THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF SKY VALLEY.

It is so ordained and approved by vote of the City Council of the City of Sky Valley this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Hughel Goodgame, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Milner Lively, Council President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chip Durpo, Councilor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Connie Larsen, Councilor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ella Fast, City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob MacNair, Councilor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Steil, Councilor

Read and introduced on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

Adopted on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.