

OPEN AGENDA

Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board Meeting

September 16, 2025 at 12:00 noon

LIVE STREAM: www.youtube.com/c/SaultstemarieCa

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes from August 19, 2025

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

4. Tourism Overview & Update

12:10 – 12:20

5. Financial Update

12:20 – 12:30

6. New Business

12:30 – 13:00

a. City SSM Agreement- Waterfront Design

b. Mischief and Crime/Community Safety and Well Being

7. Tourism Development Fund

13:00 – 13:15

a. Annual Events

8. Resolutions

13:15 – 13:30

a. City SSM Agreement- Waterfront Design

9. Next Meeting

October 21, 2025

10. Adjournment

13:30



Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board Minutes

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

12:00

OPEN

Committee Members Present

YES	B. Barber	YES	N. Brash
NO	L. Foster	NO	G. Lacher
YES	M. Porco	YES	K. Walker
YES	R. Walker	YES	T. White
YES	K. Wyer		

Staff Resources Present

NO	B. Lamming	YES	T. Anderson
NO	A. Kenopic	YES	T. Lucarelli (Scribe)
YES	J. McClelland		

Guests

Victoria Olar – Searchmont Resort

1. Meeting Called to Order

12:05

2. Roll Call

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 15, 2025

Moved by: N. Brash

Second by: R. Walker

All in favour, Carried.

4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

- Nil

5. Tourism Overview and Update

12:08-12:12

- Group tour bookings for the Agawa Canyon Train Tour are currently higher from 2024.
- The international bridge crossing statistics show Canadian return crossing from the United States of America is down 44% for the month of June; whereas, the American crossing into Canada up 6%.
- City staff is currently working on a bid for the Canadian National Championship for marathon biking.
- The Wishart Park trail to Third Line is completed. The connection to Fourth Line will be completed this week, and the playground equipment will be installed in October.
- Killarney Air Service is a new float plane offering tours and charters from the Canadian Heritage Bushplane Centre
- City Council approved allocation of funds for the Waterfront Design Plan. Finance is working on an agreement to transfer the funds to Tourism Sault Ste. Marie. The agreement will be brought to council for approval on September 2, 2025.
- Sault Ste. Marie was successful in bidding for the Economic Development Corporation of Ontario's Regional Seminar. This will be hosted in June 2026.
- Staff is still waiting to hear on the decision for the host city for the Ontario Winter Games.

6. Financial Update

12:12-12:14

- R. Walker presented a financial update

7. New Business

12:14-12:14

- Nil

8. Tourism Development Fund (TDF) Applications

a) Disc Golf – Northern Ontario Championships

12:14-12:21

- Sault Ste. Marie has secured the right to host the Northern Ontario Disc Golf Championship through a competitive bid process.
- A successful event could not only lead to future bids for this championship but also attract larger-scale disc golf tournaments to the region.
- The city currently lacks a championship-caliber disc golf course, the Root River course will be temporarily upgraded to meet tournament standards. The cost to close and reserve Root River Golf Club for the event weekend is \$4,000.
- Staff is recommending a contribution of \$4,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to offset the Root River rental cost.

Move into Closed

12:21

Resolved that this Committee proceed into closed session to discuss matters concerning confidential third-party information; Further be it resolved that should the said closed session be adjourned, the Committee may reconvene in open session to continue to discuss the same matter without the need for a further authorizing resolution.

Municipal Act section 239(2)(i) a trade secret or scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence to the municipality or local board, which, if disclosed, could reasonably be expected to prejudice significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly with the contractual or other negotiations of a person, group of persons, or organization.

Mover: K. Walker

Seconder: N. Brash

All in favour Carried.

b) Searchmont Fall Tours Presentation

12:23-13:18

c) Conference Bid #2025-001

13:18-13:25

Return to Open

13:25

d) Henderson Metal Fall Classic Curling

13:25-13:35

- The 3rd annual Henderson Metal Fall Classic will take place from October 23–26, 2025, and draws out-of-town spectators from across the world for up to four nights.
- In 2023 a TDF contribution of \$53,000, gave the YNCU Curling Centre enhanced live-streaming capabilities. In 2024, a contribution of \$7,612.39 upgraded the PA System and purchased turf carpeting for spectator area.
- Staff is recommending a contribution of \$10,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support the 2025 Henderson Metal Fall Classic's marketing budget and production of the live stream.

e) Sault Surge Northeastern Ontario Regional (NEOR) Swim Meet

13:35-13:39

- The NEOR Swim Meet, scheduled for October 25–26, 2025, at the John Rhodes Community Centre is a Swim Ontario-sanctioned regional competition. Up to 225 youth athletes from across Northeastern Ontario will participate in the two-day event.
- Staff recommend a contribution of \$2,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream towards the John Rhodes venue rental, Swim ON fees, and advertising.

8. Resolutions

13:39-13:43

a. TDF - Searchmont Fall Colour Tour - Differed

b. TDF – Conference #2025-001

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$10,000 through the Tourism Development Fund- Conferences and Special Events Stream to support Conference Bid #2025-001 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: K. Wyer

Second by: R. Walker

All in favour, Carried.

c. TDF - Northern Ontario Disc Golf Championships

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$4,000 through the Tourism Development Fund – Conferences and Special Events stream to support the Northern Ontario Disc Golf Championships scheduled for September 27/28, 2025 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: No Movers

Second by: No Seconders

All not in favour, Motion not carried.

d. TDF- Henderson Metal Fall Classic (Soo Curlers)

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$10,000 through the Tourism Development Fund – Conferences and Special Events stream to support the Henderson Metal Fall Classic October 23-26, 2025 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: K. Walker

Second by: M. Porco

All in favour, Carried.

e. TDF-Sault Surge Northeastern Ontario Region Swim Meet

Be it resolved that the Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board of Directors recommend a contribution of \$2,000 through the Tourism Development Fund – Conferences and Special Events stream to support the Northeastern Ontario Region Swim Meet (NEOR) October 25-26, 2025 and that a report be submitted to City Council for consideration and approval.

Moved by: M. Porco

Second by: K. Wyer

All in favour, Carried.

f) Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 16, 2025

g) Adjournment

Moved by: K. Walker

Seconded by: M. Porco

All in favour, Carried.

13:43

The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie



Declaration of Interest – Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

Meeting Date:

I, _____ declare a potential (deemed / direct /
indirect) pecuniary interest on Council Agenda No. _____

Item Title: _____

for the following reason:

Signature

Name

Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

Indirect pecuniary interest

2 For the purposes of this Act, a member has an indirect pecuniary interest in any matter in which the council or local board, as the case may be, is concerned, if,

(a) the member or his or her nominee,

(i) is a shareholder in, or a director or senior officer of, a corporation that does not offer its securities to the public,

(ii) has a controlling interest in or is a director or senior officer of, a corporation that offers its securities to the public, or

(iii) is a member of a body,

that has a pecuniary interest in the matter; or

(b) the member is a partner of a person or is in the employment of a person or body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 2.

Interest of certain persons deemed that of member

3 For the purposes of this Act, the pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, of a parent or the spouse or any child of the member shall, if known to the member, be deemed to be also the pecuniary interest of the member. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 3; 1999, c. 6, s. 41 (2); 2005, c. 5, s. 45 (3).



MARKETING & PROMOTION

Active Marketing Campaigns during August

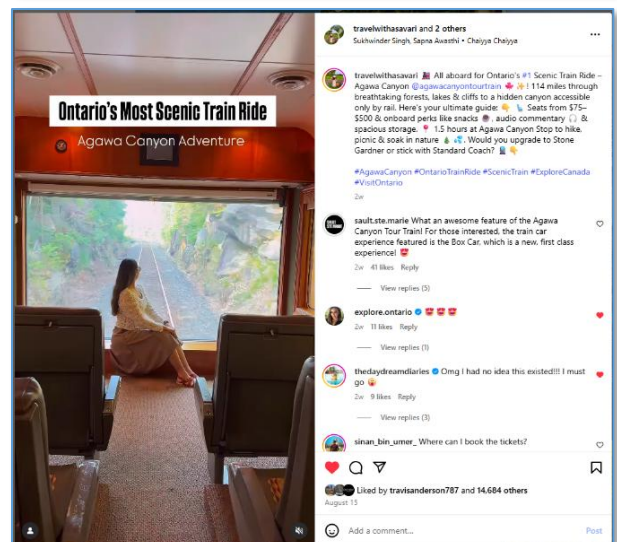
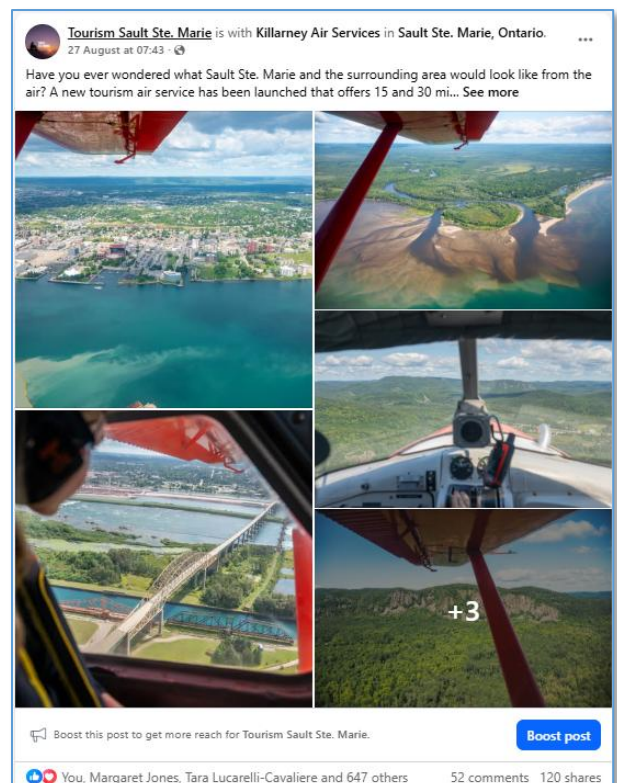
- Cavera digital marketing – pay per click, google search, paid social media ads for 'Jan – August', Train ads, Event marketing and SEO marketing.
- Laird Signs billboards x 4 between Sudbury and SSM + one north of SSM.
- Toronto Life summer feature: [A bounty of outdoor splendour awaits in Sault Ste. Marie - Toronto Life](#)
- Canada Travel Magazine – a one page feature for the train, boat, Hiawatha and Lake Superior coast
- MyNorth Vacation Guide – a two page feature about reasons to visit SSM
- 'Canada Calling' print flyer marketing in Mackinaw City / St. Ignace.
- Influencer visit Travelwithasarvi for train and City attractions

Website (August)

- 77k users, (87k users in July)
- 138k page views (148k in July)
 - Agawa Train 51k (32k in July)
 - Home Page 13k (31k in July)
 - Summer in the Soo 11k (16k in July)
 - Sandy Beach 9.1k (11k in July)
 - Activities & Attractions 5.3k (5.6 in July)
- Canada 56k (73%), US 19.5k (25%)
- Within Canada: Ontario 51k (91%), Quebec 5.6k (9%)
- By City: (GTA around 32%) Toronto 16.3k (29%), SSM 3k (5%)
- Within US: Michigan 10k (51%), Wisconsin 1.3k (6%), Ohio 1k (5%)

Primary drivers

- **Paid Media:** 54.7k (62k in July)
- **Organic Search:** 9.6k (10.3k in July)
- **Referrals:** 4.9k (5.3k in July)
 - Instagram 1k
 - Agawa Train 708 (485 in July)
 - Village Media 315k (1.9k in July)
 - Saultstemarie 280 (218 in July)
 - Northernontariotravel 256 (258 in July)
 - TorontoLife 149
 - Destination Ontario 119 (122 in July)
 - Chatgtp 52 (45 in July)
- **Offsite clicks:** 41.3k (35.3k in July)
 - AgawaTrain 20.7k (13k in July)
 - SooLockTours 2.1k (2.5k in July)
 - Big Ben Bus 644 (767 in July)
 - Pancake Bay 411 (549 in July)
 - Machine Shop 261 (244 in July)
 - Entomica 200 (213 in July)
 - Bushplane 190 (466 in July)





Newsletter (August, 2025)

- 210 subscribers
- 87 (45%) opens, 14 (7%) clicks, 15 (7%) bounces, 1 (1%) unsubscribe

Instagram (August, 2025)

- 23,876 page followers (867 new followers in August)
- 43.4k accounted reached (30k in July)

Facebook (August, 2025)

- 35k followers (150 new followers in August)
- 800k accounts reached (966k in July)

PARTNERSHIPS

- Staff have assisted with the marketing launch of Sault Ste. Marie's newest tourism operator; Killarney Airlines Services, offering arial tours leaving from the Canadian Heritage Bushplane Museum.

GROUP TOURS

- Coordinated and finalized itinerary for a familiarization tour for a group tour operator that is researching the city as a destination
- Staff member is coordinating with cruise lines and group tour operators to take photos to promote Sault Ste. Marie as a destination for group travel

MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

- Staff attended the Canadian Meeting and Events Expo in Toronto on August 12 and 13, 2025 to meet with over 250 meeting and event planners to promote SSM for meetings and conventions business.
- Staff working on a bid proposal for an association annual general meeting and convention

SPORTS TOURISM

- Staff are finalizing a bid proposal for a National Championship
- Supporting the planning of several upcoming events, including the Henderson Metal Fall Classic (Oct 2025), the 2026 Police Curling Championship (Apr 2026), and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) softball tournament (June 2026)
- Working with local organizations to prepare for an Ontario Cup Cross Country Ski event (Jan 2026) and three Northern Ontario Hockey Association Tournament of Champions events (Mar 2026)

EVENTS

- Staff is supporting the 8 Epic Hours of Superior Singletrack and the Queen Street Cruise for 2026.

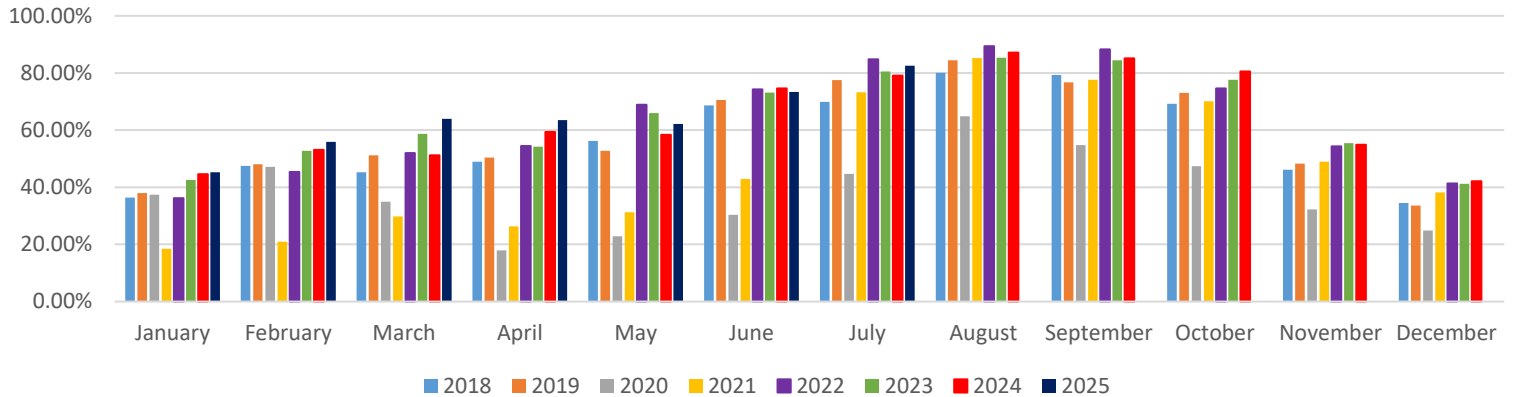
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT FUND APPLICATIONS

Three (3) Tourism Development applications were approved for recommendation at the August Tourism Sault Ste. Marie Board meeting.

- a. Conference #2025-001 - \$10,000
- b. Henderson Metal Fall Classic - \$10,000
- c. Sault Serge Northeastern Ontario region Swim Meet - \$2,000



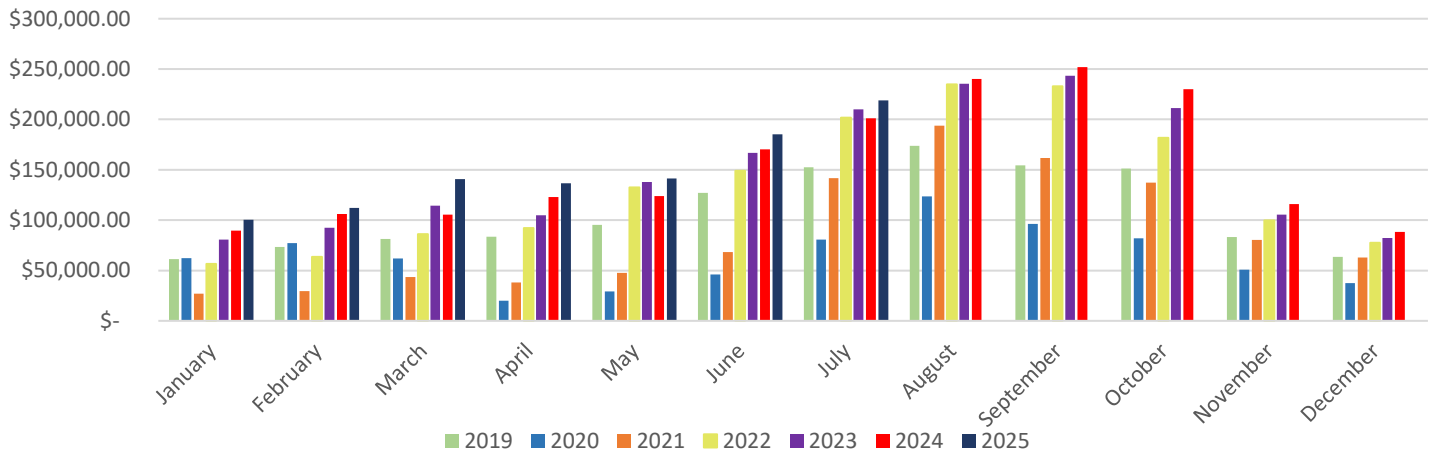
Occupancy Report Percentage



Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	36.4%	38.0%	37.4%	18.5%	36.2%	42.6%	44.6%
February	47.5%	48.1%	47.2%	21.0%	45.4%	52.8%	53.1%
March	45.3%	51.2%	35.0%	29.8%	52.0%	58.7%	51.2%
April	49.0%	50.4%	17.9%	26.3%	54.4%	54.2%	59.4%
May	56.2%	52.7%	22.8%	31.2%	68.9%	66.0%	58.3%
June	68.7%	70.6%	30.4%	42.9%	74.3%	73.1%	74.6%
July	69.9%	77.5%	44.7%	73.3%	84.8%	80.5%	79.1%
August	80.1%	84.4%	64.8%	85.2%	89.4%	85.4%	87.1%
September	79.3%	76.7%	54.8%	77.6%	88.2%	84.5%	85.1%
October	69.2%	73.0%	47.4%	70.1%	74.6%	77.6%	80.5%
November	46.2%	48.3%	32.3%	49.0%	54.3%	55.4%	54.9%
December	34.5%	33.6%	24.9%	38.2%	41.3%	41.2%	42.1%
Year	2025						
January	45.3%						
February	55.9%						
March	63.6%						
April	63.5%						
May	62.2%						
June	73.4%						
July	82.6%						
August							
September							
October							
November							
December							



Municipal Accommodation Tax Collection



Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	\$ 61,402.77	\$ 64,208.56	\$26,828.55	\$56,396.18	\$80,655.72	\$89,650.05
February	\$ 73,525.06	\$ 77,030.47	\$29,513.74	\$63,642.86	\$92,555.42	\$105,967.89
March	\$ 81,314.31	\$ 61,777.73	\$43,484.40	\$85,984.43	\$114,238.43	\$105,505.22
April	\$ 83,529.32	\$ 19,975.27	\$37,975.04	\$ 92,129.11	\$104,900.11	\$123,067.05
May	\$ 95,421.32	\$ 29,273.55	\$47,705.95	\$132,331.95	\$137,716.33	\$123,901.89
June	\$127,202.00	\$ 46,100.00	\$68,191.40	\$148,947.49	\$166,686.98	\$170,317.97
July	\$152,541.57	\$ 80,779.28	\$141,698.08	\$201,761.44	\$209,842.90	\$201,082.17
August	\$173,804.29	\$123,601.95	\$193,741.49	\$234,917.71	\$235,394.73	\$240,030.59
September	\$154,367.41	\$ 96,304.68	\$161,796.26	\$232,840.92	\$243,431.26	\$251,857.75
October	\$151,211.55	\$ 81,808.25	\$137,386.81	\$181,749.16	\$211,223.28	\$229,975.04
November	\$83,086.94	\$ 50,936.13	\$80,212.95	\$99,833.60	\$105,359.99	\$116,090.14
December	\$63,379.61	\$ 37,395.67	\$63,006.74	\$77,354.50	\$82,192.25	\$88,211.20
Total	\$1,300,786.15	\$769,191.54	\$1,031,541.41	\$1,607,889.35	\$1,785,365.26	\$1,845,656.96
Year	2025					
January	\$100,252.21					
February	\$112,087.59					
March	\$140,690.29					
April	\$136,601.74					
May	\$141,324.74					
June	\$185,156.53					
July	\$218,937.08					
August						
September						
October						
November						
December						
Total	\$1,035,050.18					



Income Statement @ August 2025

Revenue:	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25	May-25	Jun-25	Jul-25	Aug-25	Total
5205 Ont Spec Grant Other	12,000.00			11,250.00	397,154.56			172,530.13	592,934.69
5206 Infrastructure Canada Grant			286,880.76						286,880.76
5405 MAT Revenue			208,874.25			208,874.25			417,748.50
5861 Advertising Revenue		33,750.00		110.80					33,860.80
5847 Interest Revenue	2,480.88	1,970.11	1,178.65	1,440.92	1,875.70	1,874.65	2,902.97	2,178.85	15,902.73
5852 Misc Income				66,727.58	88,341.16			2,000.00	157,068.74
5862 Merchandise Revenue		127.44	1,571.86			557.40	305.30		2,562.00
5863 Ontario Cup Mountain Race				900.00	1,460.00	4,445.00	5,561.74		12,366.74
			-						-
Total	14,480.88	35,847.55	498,505.52	80,429.30	488,831.42	215,751.30	8,770.01	176,708.98	1,519,324.96
Expenses:			-						
6111 Office Expense	158.91	15.54	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	158.91	1,127.91
6170 Memberships and Subscriptions	19,840.65	493.71	5,000.00	32.20				492.20	25,858.76
6182 Travel	2,233.87	5,102.88	1,004.08	12.88	1,831.56	523.66		1,153.90	11,862.83
6184 Trade Shows/Conferences	(630.82)			5,000.00	3,500.00	1,138.14	536.33	2,545.28	12,088.93
6185 Meal Allowances	330.60	1,092.00	367.00		734.00			328.00	2,851.60
6462 Insurance			1,829.52	1,378.08					3,207.60
6470 Postal Service	5.20	8.32	93.37	30.77	168.24	358.92		97.95	762.77
6475 Bookkeeping Expenses	883.49	1,073.07	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40	1,039.40		7,153.56
6504 Consulting Fees		1,829.34							1,829.34
6540 Advertising	14,762.61	9,715.70	14,956.70	120,340.29	47,903.60	39,416.57	22,020.65	17,618.91	286,735.03
6544 Promotions	1,427.27	1,509.12	37,553.52		9,260.00	1,913.30	1,238.96	782.50	53,684.67
6545 Meetings	105.17	114.33	127.84	118.33	126.42	113.85		104.46	810.40
6632 General Development	72,255.38	7,756.53	44,761.25	385,805.68	9,375.78	36,437.95	328,208.75	185,114.82	1,069,716.14
6633 Tours					4,952.78	311.82	292.68	4,345.18	9,902.46
6634 Events	4,457.83	13,479.10	1,564.62	380.39	2,133.31	360.82	243.72		22,619.79
6710 Interest & Penalty AR General		4.69							4.69
6720 Bank Charges	112.98	97.20	69.52	222.11	100.00		32.47		634.28
Total Expenses	115,943.14	42,291.53	108,525.73	514,519.04	81,284.00	81,773.34	353,771.87	212,742.11	1,510,850.76
Other Expense			-						
7700 Exchange Gain or Loss	-	132.00	(629.61)	(23.54)	-	253.14			(268.01)
Net Income	(101,462.26)	(6,311.98)	389,350.18	(434,113.28)	407,547.42	134,231.10	(345,001.86)	(36,033.13)	8,206.19