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## **Blue Ridge Region Governments Preparing for Cutting Edge Service Delivery**

*Strategic planning initiatives set the stage for local governments to accommodate future technologies, improve current services.*

Roanoke, VA –

Local governments throughout the Blue Ridge region are positioning themselves to offer sophisticated “e-government” services to their citizens in the not-so-distant future. The cities of Roanoke and Lynchburg, as well as Nelson and Rockingham counties have recently embarked on strategic planning initiatives focused on modernizing and streamlining some of their IT operations. All four governments recently engaged Roanoke-based Virtual IT, Inc. to play a key role with these efforts.

Virtual IT is an information technology consulting firm specializing in enterprise architecture, information security and business strategy. One of the firm’s areas of expertise is working with local governments.

“It is very exciting,” says Roy Mentkow, “to be developing an application infrastructure utilizing evolving technologies to support the City of Roanoke’s business processes over the next ten years.” Mentkow, Roanoke’s Acting Director of Technology, says the future holds “tremendous efficiencies.” For example, he says, “we are looking forward to tying together a citizen’s complete repertoire of accounts, such as personal property and real estate taxes, water bills, business licenses, and even dog licenses.”

The City of Roanoke chose Virtual IT from a field that included some IT consulting giants. “We were impressed with Virtual IT’s individualized approach, personal service and solid methodology,” says Mentkow. “And we know they have an investment in doing a good job because they’re local.”

Frank O’Byrne, Director of Information Systems for Rockingham County is also enthused about the future. Virtual IT will be redesigning and upgrading the county’s website and facilitating the county’s e-government vision for the future. “Everyone on the staff is extremely excited,” he says. “This is part of an ongoing modernization of our entire computing environment. We are now focusing on services that can be delivered to our citizens outside our walls.”

These initiatives will have far-reaching impacts for their participants. “We’re shaping systems for our successors,” says Mentkow.

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