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## **Cambridge city department heads: Deputy city manager Richard Rossi**

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Richard Rossi is the deputy city manager for the city of Cambridge. He has been working in the Cambridge community for over 30 years, starting in 1971. Rossi works very closely with city manager, Robert Healy in overseeing the day to day operation and administration of all the city departments, with the exception of the school department. Rossi is also responsible in the oversight of the city's major capital projects and manages the challenges that arise as needed, to resolve them. The city has a Capital Improvement Plan over the next 4 years, through 2012 which totals \$181 million for a variety of projects.

When Rossi became deputy city manager Cambridge had its bond ratings suspended and was in a negative free cash deficit position. Community relations also needed much improvement. There was not much investment throughout the city and real estate development was on hold along with other civic projects. Rossi knew the city had many problems, but saw so much potential when it came to Cambridge. How did they turn it around?

Rossi and Healy started first by building a strong administration, appointing key individuals as department heads and to other important management positions. They reestablished the city's bond ratings, developed a capital improvements program, and rebuilt the city's infrastructure. Over the years, they improved their bond rating and eventually achieved the unique status of being one of six cities in the nation to attain a AAA bond rating from all three credit ratings agencies. They have maintained the three AAA ratings for the last nine years, thus enabling them to borrow money at lower rates, creating an environment for strong development by the private sector. Areas that were undeveloped in the early 1980s, today are fully developed and on the tax roles. They've professionalized city government and continue to offer a high level of service to the citizens of Cambridge.

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