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## **Cambridge city department heads: Budget director David Kale**

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David Kale is the budget director for the city of Cambridge. He has been with the city for over 20 years, including a brief stint as CFO of the Arlington, Mass. public school system. As the deputy finance director, Kale and his staff oversee the city's entire operating and capital budget process which is approximately \$450 million in 2008. The preparation of the budget, which is submitted to the city council by the city managers office for approval, is a year-round process which follows strict guidelines and due diligence by not only his department, but all other city departments. It is leadership displayed by the Kale and his staff that allow Cambridge to maintain the exclusive AAA Bond rating, which the city has enjoyed since 1999.

For the 21st consecutive year the city of Cambridge received the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) award for excellence. The GFOA established the Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program in 1984 to encourage and assist state and local governments to prepare budget documents of the very highest quality that reflect both the guidelines established by the National Advisory Council on State and Local Budgeting and the GFOA's recommended practices on budgeting and then to recognize individual governments that succeed in achieving that goal.

When preparing and monitoring finances and budgets, the city recognized that in order to remain one of the top city's in the country, they needed to be more efficient in the way they maintain information and keep track of each departments benchmarks throughout the year. They saw that new technology could enhance the process. That's when they implemented and integrated budget, benchmark and Narrative Development System. Previously, this data was contained in separate databases which were not integrated into one document. This required information to be manually typed into the public budget document.

The implementation of the new online Narrative Development System allows departments to edit and submit required information electronically as well as view and print integrated budget book narratives with up-to-date real time financial and performance measurement information from the budget development and benchmarking systems, which were automated in prior years.

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