



38th Annual Conference &

Membership Meeting

September 17-19, 2025 – Columbus, OH

Express Yourself

How Agencies Are Using Online Publications to
Reach Communities and Councils

By: Bill Hart

Today's Speaker



Bill Hart



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OpenGov
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Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and
Workforce Development

Agenda



01 The History of U.S. Budget Books

06 Q + A

02 Advantages to Online Budget Books

03 Online Budget/Capital Books

04 Beyond Budgets

05 The Future of Budget Books: AI

Birth of the Public Government Budget

1711

The Kingdom of Great Britain forms the South Sea Company

- Converting a portion of the national debt into shares of South Sea Company stock
- 1 share = 1 claim British trade monopoly over South America

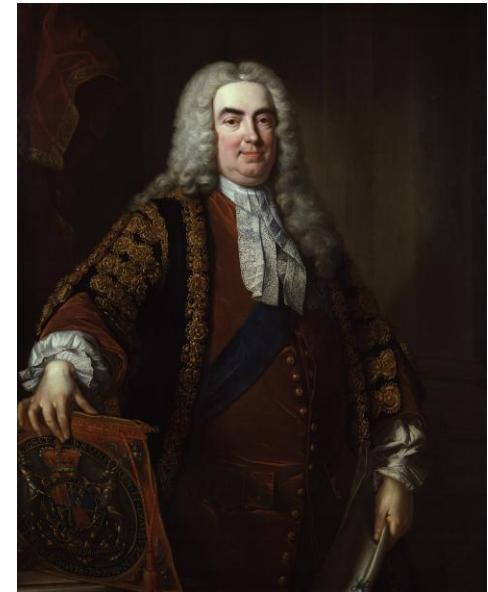
1720

Great Britain goes all in on the debt-for-stock swap plan

- All national debt converted into shares
 - January share price: £100
 - August share price: £1,000
 - September share price: £150
- Economic depression and widespread mistrust in government

1721

MP **Robert Walpole** proposes making the Parliamentary budget public to restore trust in government



Online Budget Books v. PDFs

Advantages of Going Digital

1. Survey Tools
1. Tracking clicks and engagement leads to surprising areas of importance
1. Makes data accessible and interactive

Kyle, Texas

Second-fastest growing U.S. city

The Challenge

- Population in 2000: **6,348**
- Population in 2025: **73,274**

The Results

- Created their first ever comprehensive Strategic Plan in an online, interactive publication





“

“Don’t wait for the perfect time. It doesn’t exist. Start with what you can fix. Build trust. Use the momentum. Once people see what’s possible, they want to be part of it.”

-Joshua Chronley, Assistant Director of Administrative Services.

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Colerain Township, OH

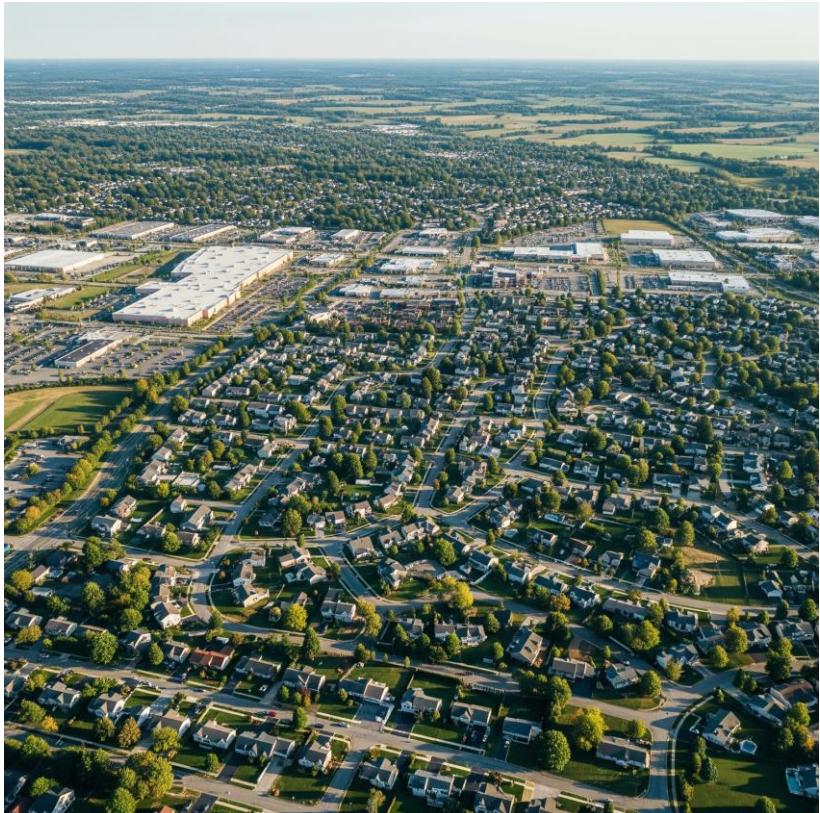
Northwest Cincinnati suburb

The Challenge

- Go from reactive data sharing to proactive strategy
- Lacked a single platform of accurate data for internal and external reporting

The Results

- Improved productivity
- Gained a top transparency score
- Detailed performance data shareable to the public



New Carrollton, MD

30 mins outside of D.C.

The Challenge

- Eliminate manual data entry and the inefficiency of Excel for its operations
- Sought a digital services solution to upgrade its budgeting system

The Results

- Strategic time reallocation, moving staff away from cumbersome manual tasks.
- Improved reporting capabilities to create a CIP, instrumental in bolstering community trust.
- Created a portal to display financial reports in publications





Beyond Budgets

Winchester, VA

Smaller government strategic plan

The Challenge

- Sought to strengthen the connection between strategic planning, budgeting, and reporting on strategic initiatives
- Easily share performance publicly

The Results

- Increased transparency of general ledger information
- Online strategic plan
- Easy-to-understand web page that pulls data directly from the transparency portal



Forest Park, GA

30 minutes outside of Atlanta

The Challenge

- Modernize operations to serve its residents better, including reduced budget book creation time, the ability to establish KPIs for stronger decision-making, and streamlined solicitation planning

The Results

- Streamline budget preparation
- Meet GFOA standards
- Make solicitations much easier to develop, providing a modern support system for the City's financial and procurement wor.



Newport News, VA

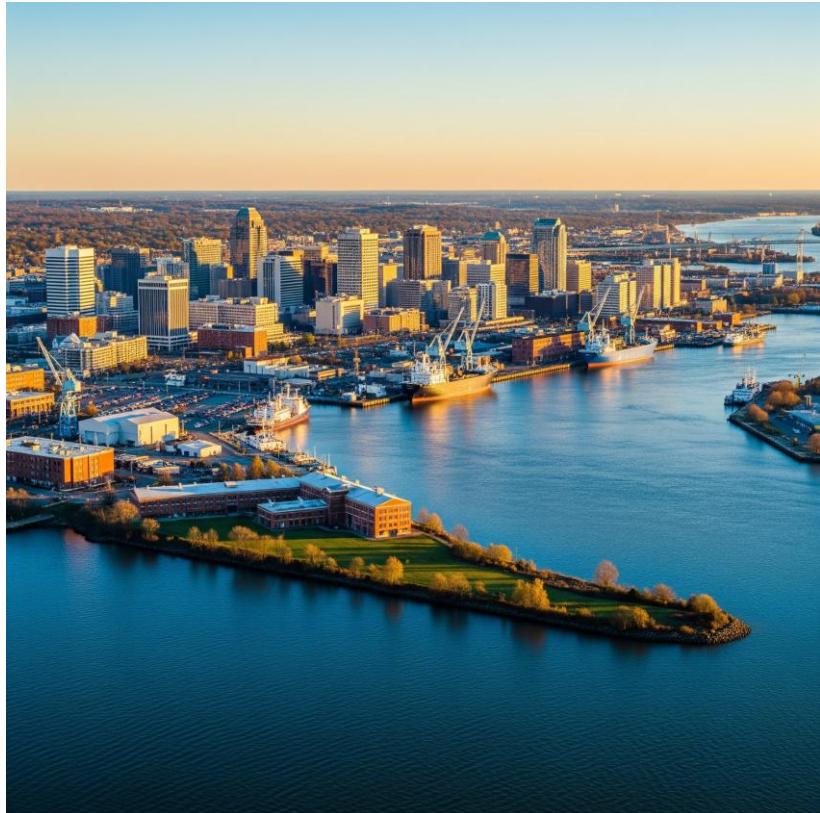
Tidewater region of Virginia

The Challenge

- During and after COVID, the city wanted constituent feedback regarding ARPA funding and other initiatives

The Results

- Created an online Community Feedback portal to quantify issues constituents felt strongly about



AI and the Future of Budget Books

The AI-powered forecasting tool will enable agencies to:

- Automatically generate forecasts using historical actuals and AI trend analysis
- Integrate live data from ERP, personnel planning, and grants without manual stitching
- Model multi-year scenarios (3 to 10 years) to plan for different financial outcomes
- Run "what-if" analyses to evaluate the impact of key assumptions and decisions
- Make real-time adjustments and see instant updates to forecasts and visuals
- Use AI to generate plain-language summaries and answer natural language questions such as "What if CAGR is 4.5%?"
- Create multiple forecast types including 5-year, 10-year, end-of-year balance, and cash flow



Budgeting & Performance

End-to-end Collaborative Budgeting
and Performance Management

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Set goals, create and track metrics, then connect spending to outcomes

OPERATING BUDGET

Collaborative tools to drive an automated and strategic process

CAPITAL PLANNING

Prioritize, plan, and promote your biggest investments

WORKFORCE PLANNING

Simplify planning for your most important asset – your people

DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS

Publish an interactive GFOA award-winning budget book and online dashboards directly from your budgeting system

Digital Publications: Online Budget Book

Publish a fully interactive GFOA award-winning budget

Compile information using a single source

Pull information easily from your dashboards and reports

Create a user-friendly online budget book for all audiences

CITY OF Springfield

BUDGET HOME **BUDGET SUMMARIES** **DEPARTMENTS** **CAPITAL** **TABLE OF CONTENTS** **SELECT LANGUAGE**

Greetings from

SPRINGFIELD 417

FY 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

SPRINGFIELD, MO

OVERVIEW

• Budget Message

LINKS (leaving the budget site)

City of Springfield Website • <https://www.springfieldmo.gov/>

Forward SGF • <https://www.forwardsgf.com/>

<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/5319/Capital-Improvement-Plan>

<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/297/Financial-Reports>

<https://www.springfieldmo.gov/5952/The-Citys-Budget>

TOWN OF Brattleboro

HOME **BUDGET SUMMARY** **DEPARTMENTS** **OTHER SERVICES** **SELECT LANGUAGE**

BUDGET

FISCAL YEAR 2025

Explore Our Budget

Town of Brattleboro's Digital Budget Book provides our community with an easy to use, interactive and engaging version of our annual publication. Use this site to browse all the departments that support our Community.

TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO

CHARTERED DECEMBER 18, 1773
WINDHAM COUNTY, VERMONT

- ✓ 5 Year Budget Projections
- ✓ Equitable Budgeting
- ✓ Program-Based Budgeting

Budgeting & Performance



"We make sure departments are including not only information about what they're doing, but also... how it connects to the city's strategic plan."

Amelia Cruver, Budget Director | City of Minneapolis, MN



Questions?

Thank You

Bill Hart

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