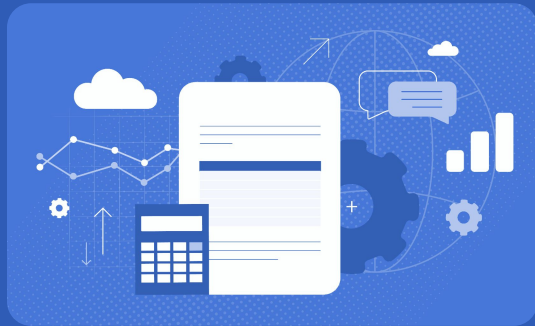


The Evolution of Budgeting & Reporting





Michael Lepore

Account Executive

OUR MISSION 

Empowering Transparent, Responsive Local Government

The road no one could find



THE CORE PROBLEM

The finance cycle wasn't built to support the needs of today.

"The traditional budget has long been criticized for being slow to adapt to changing conditions."

[Rethinking Budgeting Core Principles](#)

The pressure on public finance is rising



40

US states tracking below their long-term revenue trend heading into 2026



50K

public employees at retirement age. Plus, 30% reaching it in 10 years



149

municipalities placed on S&P watch in 2023 due to late financial statements



47%

of public officials report forecasting accuracy as a moderate to significant challenge

AND THE OVERSIGHT ONLY GROWS

ADA + GASB + State Legislation Requirements + Community expectations

The internal reality: tools that can't support today's needs



Excel

Who is still running their core budgeting process on manual spreadsheets?



ERP / Legacy

Who relies heavily on an ERP system, or a complex, fragmented combination of both?



Word

Who is building your final budget book or ACFRs manually page-by-page in Word?

General purpose tools are being stretched to support public sector work
they weren't built for.

BEST PRACTICE 1

Replace fragmented, manual handoffs with one connected source of truth



Quantify The Pain

Track manual copy-pastes and version confusion for one week.



Trace One Handoff

Pick a number you personally re-key and trace its journey.

Establish one source so edits flow automatically to every destination.

9 to 3

Months Cut

Tri-Town School Union, MA

Accelerated their entire budget-build cycle by 6 months simply by adopting a unified connected workflow.

Action: Locate a manual re-keying point and trace its source.
Fixing one handoff requires zero software spend to start.

✓ Connectivity in practice



BUDGETING

- Pull your chart of accounts and actuals from your ERP once, not every cycle
- Generate financial pages, charts and tables directly from your budget data
- Collect budget requests and edits in a shared system with permission-based access

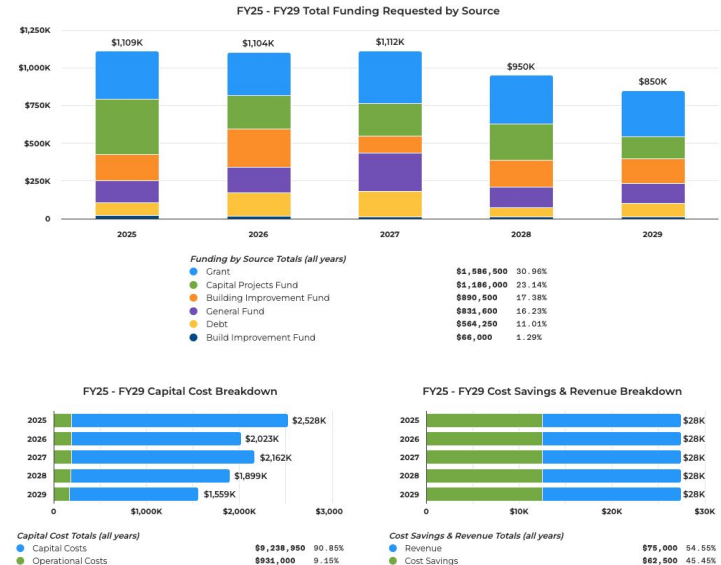


REPORTING

- Load the trial balance once, mapped to your fund and statement structure
- Change a figure and every statement, note and narrative reference updates automatically
- The same mapped data produces your ACFR, PAFR and recurring state filings

Capital Improvement Multi-Year Plan

The City of Heroville's Capital Improvement Multi-Year Plan (CIP) for FY2025 to FY2029 outlines a strategic approach to planning and implementing capital projects over a five-year horizon. This comprehensive plan requests a total funding of \$8,856,250, strategically distributed across various departments and funding sources. Public Safety is prioritized with 42.19% of the total funding, reflecting a strong commitment to maintaining community safety. Public Works follows with 25.61%, supporting essential infrastructure projects. Planning and Development, Health and Human Services, and General Government receive 13.17%, 12.87%, and 6.16% respectively, ensuring balanced growth and community services. Funding sources are diversified, with grants contributing 34.41%, the Capital Projects Fund at 20.42%, and other sources such as the Building Improvement Fund, General Fund, and debt financing ensuring robust financial backing for these initiatives. This multi-year plan serves as a roadmap for strategically investing in Heroville's infrastructure and assets, ensuring their long-term viability and supporting the city's growth and development.



BEST PRACTICE 2

Ensure continuity amidst staff changes



The Vulnerability

Lean teams often rely on single points of failure, where critical institutional knowledge sits in one person's head.

"Your goal should be to figure out how the work process can be designed to succeed despite the errors people make."

— GFOA, "Rework"



No more "magic spreadsheets"

Succession planning means designing systemized workflows that automate routine data entry and prevent errors automatically.

Case Study: Orange County, VA

An accountant nearing retirement was the only one who knew how to build the budget on an old legacy database. Modern tooling secured the transition, moving the process from one head into a repeatable system.



ACTION

Hand your budget-build documentation to the newest person on your team and have them follow it start to finish with zero help from you. **Wherever they get stuck is your real succession risk — fix that spot first.**

✓ Continuity in practice



BUDGETING

- Run budget collection through a standardized workflow anyone can pick up
- Automate reminders and follow-ups so nothing depends on one person's memory
- Require standard fields so every department submits the same way



REPORTING

- Mapping rules and statement structures live in the platform, not in one person's memory
- Prior-year structure rolls forward
- A new preparer inherits a set process with a documented workflows in the system

Request Details Scorecard Bulk Actions

Drag here to set row groups

☐ Request Title	FY2026 Capital Cost	Budgeted Years Capital Cost	Department	Priority Ranking
☐ Keyboard and Mouse Combos	\$100	\$100	General Governm...	4 / 4 Joe Harr...
☐ Accessible Buses	\$275,000	\$775,000	Planning and De...	3 / 6 Emily Ro...
☐ Public Safety Vehicle	\$130,000	\$153,000	Public Safety	1 / 7 Rachel S...
☐ Laptop Upgrade	\$170,000	\$560,000	Public Safety	2 / 7 Rachel S...
☐ Tablets for Clerks	\$45,050	\$180,200	General Governm...	1 / 4 Joe Harr...
☐ Security Database Improvements	\$35,500	\$161,000	Public Safety	4 / 7 Rachel S...
☐ Disinfection System	\$35,000	\$140,000	Health and Hum...	5 / 5 Vincent
☐ Lime Sludge Disposal System	\$35,000	\$140,000	Health and Hum...	3 / 5 Vincent
☐ Influent Flow Measurement System	\$10,000	\$40,000	Health and Hum...	2 / 5 Vincent
☐ Downtown Street Lights (Installation)	\$0	\$0	Public Works	6 / 8 Andy Le...
☐ Parking Lot Expansion	\$10,000	\$32,000	Public Safety	7 / 7 Rachel S...
☐ Bullet Proof Vests	\$63,500	\$254,000	Public Safety	5 / 7 Rachel S...
☐ Ramp for Courthouse	\$60,000	\$240,000	General Governm...	3 / 4 Joe Harr...
☐ Historic Library Restoration	\$3,000	\$9,000	Planning and De...	2 / 6 Emily Ro...
☐ East Main Street Property Purchase	\$11,000	\$21,000	Planning and De...	4 / 6 Emily Ro...
☐ Pickle Ball Courts	\$7,000	\$7,000	Planning and De...	1 / 6 Emily Ro...

BEST PRACTICE 3

Game plan for scenarios, negotiations with concrete data



Long-Term Planning

GFOA recommends maintaining a 5+ year projection of revenue, expense, and financial position.

"Understanding long-term trends allows officers to proactively address risks."



Answer "What If" in Real Time

Centralizing all your data and assumptions allows you to easily run potential scenario calculations.



Scenario Planning

With a click of a button, select budget requests and instantly model how they play out.

- Personnel & union negotiation modeling
- Multi-year forecasting & vacancy planning



Coral Springs, FL

ERP's payroll projection failed to meet needs, used ClearGov to run payroll projections and retrieve crucial financial info in minutes.



ACTION

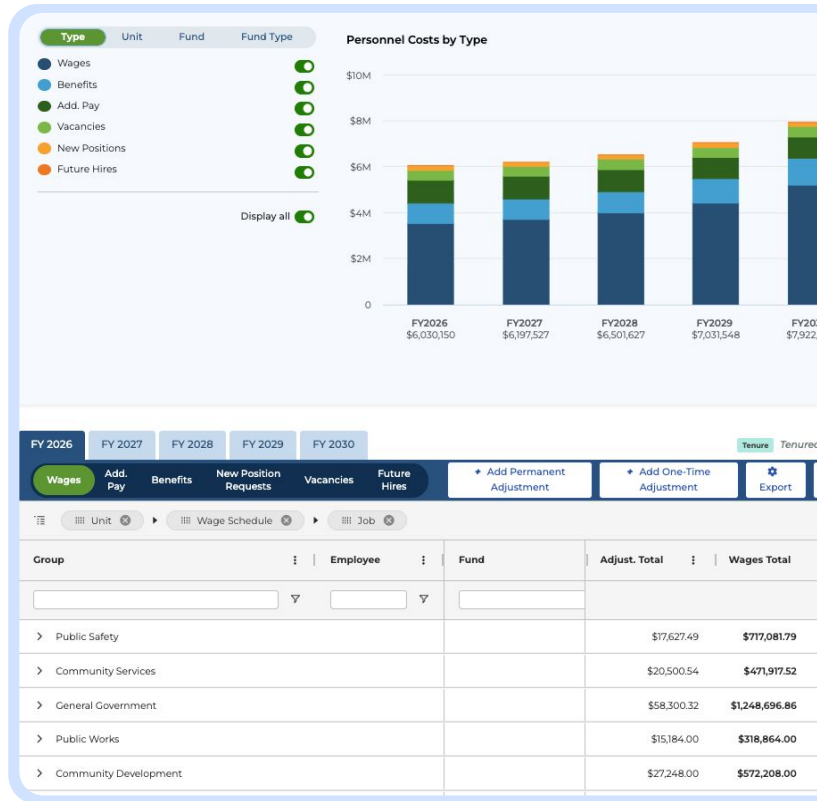
Before your next union negotiation or budget cycle, build one side-by-side what-if model — even in a spreadsheet — showing three scenarios. Bring it to your next council or board conversation and notice how differently that conversation goes.

✓ Scenario planning in practice



BUDGETING

- Build and compare capital scenarios side by side to find the optimal combination of requests
- Model COLA, step increases and new positions before you sit down for union negotiations
- Extend scenarios across multiple years without rebuilding the model



BEST PRACTICE 4

Simplify information to build public trust



Public Engagement

If you communicate well and people know where to get good info, they feel much better about where they live.



GFOA Guidelines

Organize into consistent sections, limit detail, and produce a "budget-in-brief" supplement with charts.

"The design should be simple and easy to use, but attractive."



Vicksburg, MI

Faced with past mismanagement, leadership shifted to an interactive transparency platform to rebuild community connection.

Result: Critical resident emails "effectively dried up" as trust was restored.



ACTION

Pick the five numbers your residents and council actually ask about, and build a single one-page budget-in-brief. You can build version one in a slide deck or a one-pager, no new tool required.

A shared source of truth

A digital budget book, transparency portal, and PAFR give residents one place to look. They also give staff one place to point.



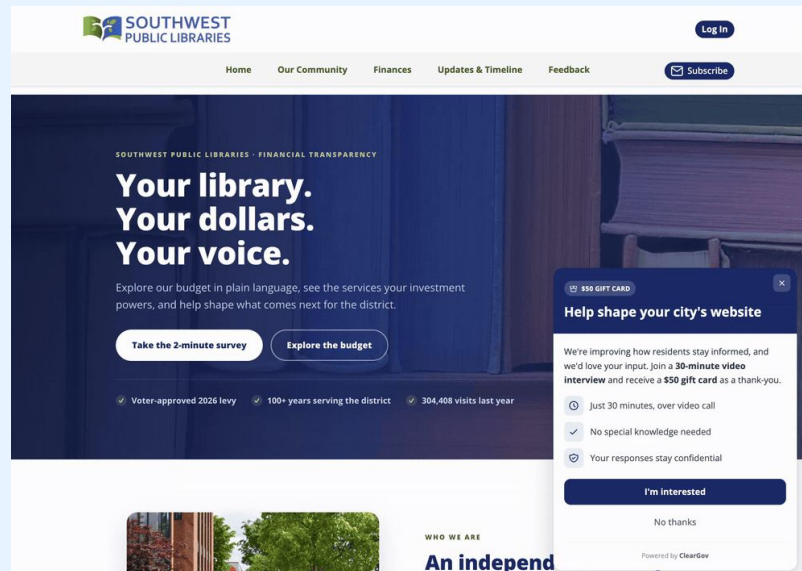
Residents self-serve instead of filing requests



Council, press, and public all cite the same figures



The budget and financial story is explained, not just published



What two-way looks like

The screenshot shows a web interface for the Town of Salem, NH. At the top, a green header bar contains the text "Town of Salem, NH" and a menu icon. Below the header, a chatbot interface is displayed. A grey speech bubble on the left says "Hi! What can I help you with?". A green speech bubble on the right says "Where does my money go and what is the biggest expense?". Below the chat bubbles, a light grey box contains the text: "Based on the **Town of Salem's 2026 budget**, your money is primarily allocated to public safety and municipal operations." Below this, the heading "Where the money goes" is followed by the text: "The **total General Fund budget** is **\$65.82 million**, including capital improvements and separate warrant articles. The largest departmental allocations are:". Below the text is a table with three columns: "Department", "2026 Budget", and "Approx. share". The table is currently empty. At the bottom right of the chat area, there is a microphone icon and a circular button with a downward arrow.



Participatory budgeting

Residents allocate a defined pot of money



Budget simulators

Trade-offs become tangible before the vote



Feedback tools

Structured input on a specific question, in a set window

A path forward

A recap to align your processes



01

Connect data once

No one should re-key the same number twice.



02

Design for turnover

Build for the institution, not just the architect.



03

Model scenario logic

Prep options before late-night negotiations force it.



04

Simplify clarity

Publish exactly what people require to build lasting trust.

We help fix the pieces hurting you most without the tech overhaul



Built for the public sector

2,000+

communities and organizations
run on ClearGov

\$540B+

In budgets under management

TRUSTED ACROSS EVERY TYPE OF PUBLIC-SECTOR ORGANIZATION



States



Cities



Counties



School Districts



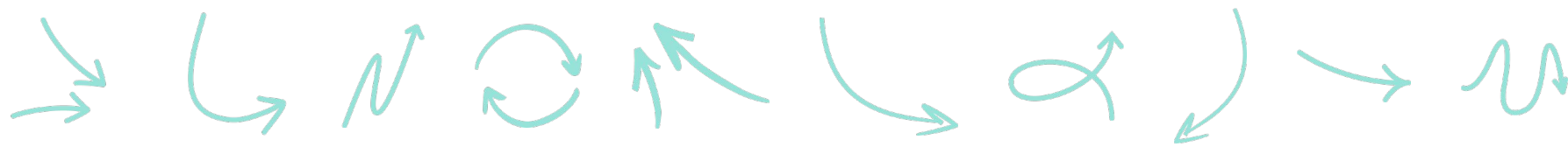
Special Districts

Thank You.

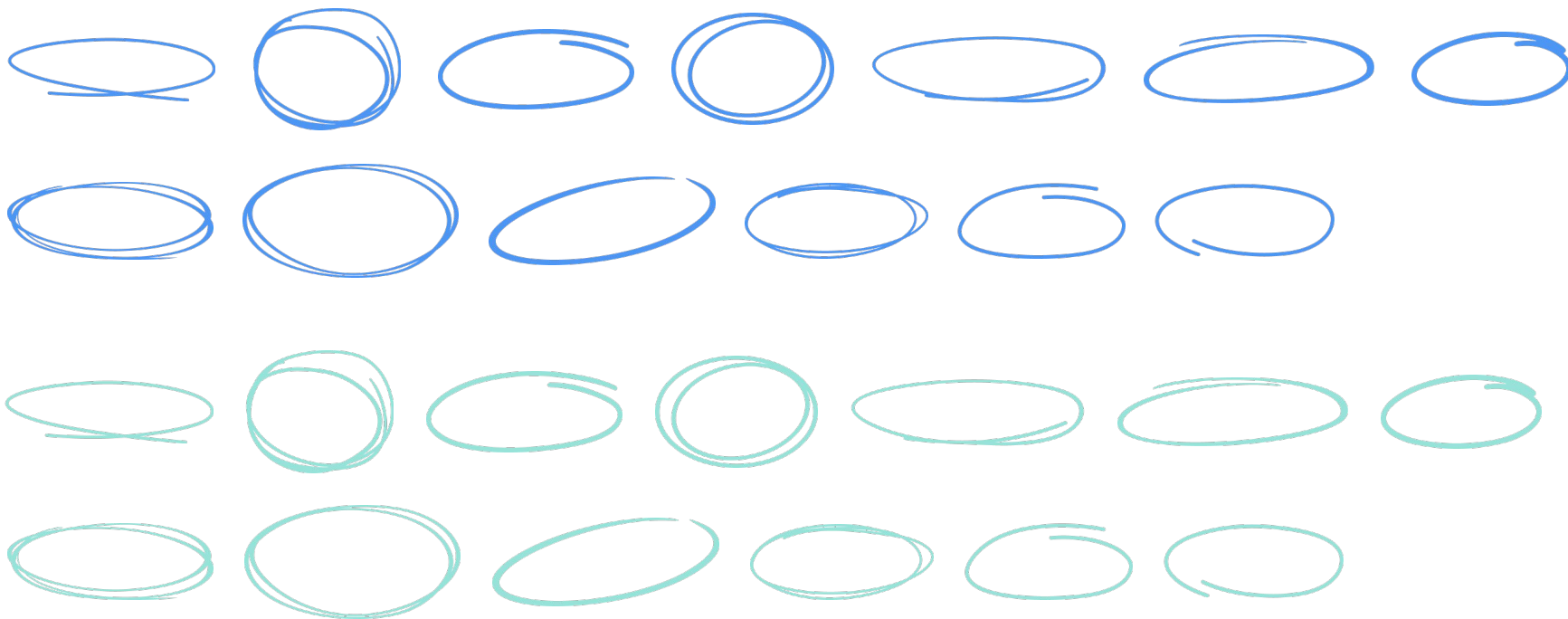


We make the tools. You make the difference.

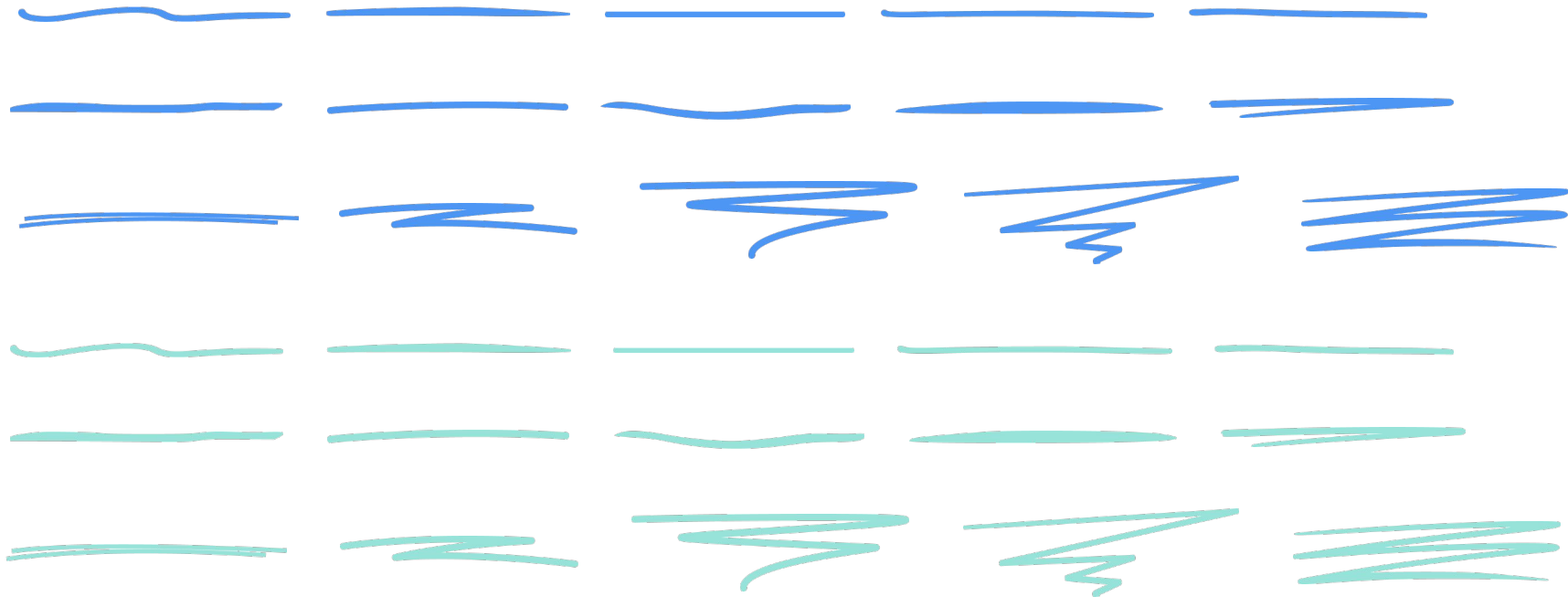
Arrows



Circles



Underlines



Accent Marks

