

---

ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE  
NEWS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 4, 2015

**For additional information contact:**

Lisa LaPlante at (616) 632-7182 or [Lisa.LaPlante@kentcountymi.gov](mailto:Lisa.LaPlante@kentcountymi.gov)

**Fiscal Services Awarded for Distinguished Presentation**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – Transparency and maintaining county assets are top priorities for the Kent County Fiscal Services Department. For the 13<sup>th</sup> year in a row – and a total of 15 times in the last 18 years - Kent County received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the 2015 County Budget. The award reflects the commitment of the Board and staff to meeting the “highest principles of governmental budgeting.”

The award requires municipalities to satisfy national guidelines for effective budget presentation, including how well its budget serves as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communications device. “This award exemplifies the commitment of Kent County’s elected officials and staff to be a statewide leader in financial management,” said Fiscal Services Director Steve Duarte. “Because Kent County demonstrates strong financial management in this and other areas, our citizens reap the benefits of our AAA bond rating through lower interest rates when the County has to borrow.”

Among the criteria for judging the County’s 2015 Budget:

- The document should include a coherent statement of organization-wide, strategic goals and strategies that address long-term concerns and issues.
- Describe short-term factors that influence the decisions made in the development of the budget for the upcoming year.
- The budget message needs to articulate priorities and issues for the upcoming year.
- The message should describe significant changes in priorities from the current year and explain the factors that led to those changes and should include statistical and supplemental data that describe the organization, its community, and population, as well as background information related to the services provided.

The GFOA is a non-profit professional association with over 17,600 members in the United States and Canada. This is the only national awards program in governmental budgeting, and only about 1,200 entities receive it annually. “While every department in the County contributes to this effort, I commend Budget Director Marvin Van Nortwick and his staff for the extraordinary effort it takes to get this document prepared in a very constrained time frame,” Duarte added.

###