

Purchasing Division Receives International Accreditation

Oakland County’s Purchasing Division has received the Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP). The award is given only to leaders in the public procurement profession based on a comprehensive review of purchasing practices and professionalism (see award criteria in Table 1). It demonstrates the highest standard of competency in the public purchasing profession and emphasizes that the entity receiving the accreditation can make sound decisions that reflect maximum value for the taxpayer’s dollar.

Table 1: NIGP Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award Criteria

Mission and Strategies	Organization
Authority and Responsibility	Planning and Scheduling
Standards and Specifications	Personnel and Professional Development
Best Practices	Audit and Evaluation
Property Management	Cooperative Purchasing
Automated Purchasing Systems	Electronic Commerce

About NIGP...

The National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP) is a national, membership-based non-profit organization providing support to professionals in the public sector purchasing profession by providing education, professional networking, research, and technical assistance. NIGP has over 2100 agency members representing federal, state, provincial and local government entities across the United States and Canada.

Oakland County

With the most vibrant economy in the state and placing in the top one percent of all counties with a triple AAA bond rating, Oakland has a well-deserved, but hard-earned reputation for being among the best managed and fiscally sound counties in the nation, not to mention a great place to live and work. Arguably the most important factor in our achieving this reputation has been our business-wise approach to government...

- ✚ I appoint experienced professionals to oversee operations
- ✚ We keep the focus of our operations squarely on the taxpayers, businesses, and citizens of the county – they are the one and only reason we are here

- ✚ Fiscal matters are handled prudently with an ever-present eye on the value constituents receive for their tax / fee dollars, by maximizing service levels and quality in the most efficient manner possible
- ✚ We consistently apply new technologies to enhance our efficiencies and improve service delivery to businesses and residents
- ✚ Our Emerging Sectors project, Automation Alley, Wireless Oakland, and numerous other initiatives continue to attract new businesses and jobs to the county
- ✚ By growing our tax base and focusing on operational efficiencies, we are keeping our property tax rates stable and our fee increases to a minimum

The Purchasing Division

The accreditation of our Purchasing Division symbolizes our business-wise approach to government. We are now one of only 28 Counties in the nation to have received the Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award, an award that recognizes best business practices that include:

- ✚ automating purchasing processes with information technology
- ✚ fostering electronic commerce to expedite procurement of goods and services, and optimize payments to vendors
- ✚ identifying cost savings / containment opportunities in procurement practices
- ✚ a continuous process improvement program that includes training, business process redesign, performance-based contracting, and quality control practices
- ✚ the use of procurement cards to expedite purchasing from, and payment to, vendors
- ✚ maintaining an Internet website that provides information to stakeholders and promotes efficient and cost effective purchasing
- ✚ promoting opportunities for minority and women owned businesses to participate in the public procurement process
- ✚ disposing via auction of county assets that have been replaced to help offset replacement costs
- ✚ sponsoring cooperative purchasing agreements with vendors and other government entities

This last activity deserves further comment. The Purchasing Division has developed an intergovernmental cooperative purchasing program for use by other counties, municipalities, and school districts. The program provides cooperative purchasing agreements with vendors that have all been competitively bid to secure the best price possible for the product features and service requirements requested. The purpose of this program is to obtain lower costs for all participants by combining volumes and increasing purchasing power. This benefits not only the vendor community by providing greater efficiencies for them, but reduces overall procurement costs at *all* levels of government within Oakland County and across the state.

Today and Tomorrow

I'm proud of the professionalism and superior business practices exhibited by our Purchasing Division and the Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award is well deserved. The county has earned numerous awards in a variety of fields and the key aspect they all have in common is that while we strive for excellence, we do it because the constituents of the county deserve it. Excellence and constituent-centric focus is today, and will continue to be tomorrow, our number one priority at Oakland County.