



National Citizen-Centric Government Reporting Initiative



What?

AGA's Citizen-Centric Government Reporting project encourages governments to publish short reports that give citizens a better understanding of their government and inform a more meaningful debate about fiscal priorities, performance results and future challenges.

Citizen-Centric Reporting is driven by the fact that governments exist to serve their citizens. Citizens have the right to understand how their government operates and whether their tax dollars are being spent efficiently and effectively. Governments have the responsibility to provide that information in an easily understandable way.

This initiative encourages governments to publish an annual "state of the government" report that is no more than four pages long. The reports, designed to be visually appealing, provide understandable information to citizens about the performance and financial condition of the government as well as demographics and future challenges that answer the question, "Are we better off today than we were last year?"

"We are answering to the responsibility we have as financial managers to leave this world better than we found it. If we do not do this, no one will. We are calling on all governments to be accountable to the citizens they serve."—**Relmond P. Van Daniker, DBA, CPA, Executive Director, AGA**

Why?

Government financial statements are **too large and too complicated** for average citizens. This means the majority of governments—federal, state and local—are not reaching their citizens with some of the most significant financial and performance information. Even local governments, rich with readily available financial and performance information, may fail to properly inform their citizens if the data is not provided in an interesting and understandable way.

AGA believes that the report will make governments more **accountable to their citizens**, and will help Americans become better educated and better able to participate in government activities. Governments are encouraged to include the report in their local newspaper and post it to their government website to ensure easy access for the public.

"One thought that occurred to me is that the gold standard for accountability reporting ought to be citizen-centric. If you are doing anything else that is great but report to your citizens at a base level and give them the path to more info if that is what you have and they want. The great thing about a citizen-centric report is you can just about publish July 1 because you don't have to do a superhuman effort to put a report together and wait for auditors."—**Thomas J. Sadowski, CGFM, CPA, Director of Accounting, Division of Accounting, State of Missouri**

How?

To make producing these reports as simple as possible, AGA has developed a content guidelines template, outlining what information should be included on each of the four pages, and a design guidelines template, which shows a suggested layout. The **state of Oregon; the city of Portland, OR; the city of Saco, ME; Maricopa County, AZ; the Village of Los Lunas, NM; and Washington, D.C.** have produced their own reports. Each of these received positive citizen and media attention. Completed reports can be viewed at www.agacgfm.org/citizen/completed.aspx.

"This initiative is about honestly reporting back to our citizens and saying, 'This is what's been done well, and this is where we're going to need to improve in the years to come.' This state learned long ago that you can't move forward without its citizens weighing in, and we hope this report is a big step in making that process easier."—**John J. Radford, CGFM, CIA, CFE, State Controller, State of Oregon**



For more information about this program please visit: www.agacgfm.org/citizen/default.aspx and/or contact **Susan Fritzlen** at sfritzlen@agacgfm.org or 800.AGA.7211.