



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **City of Haslet Achieves Traditional Finances Transparency Star Award**

The City of Haslet has been notified by the Comptroller's office that it has been awarded the Traditional Finances Star in the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Transparency Stars Program. To achieve this award, the City met the program guidelines for providing financial information via the City's website that is transparent to the public, that provides clear information regarding city spending, and is in a format that is easy to use that can be searched. The City of Haslet will be listed in the Comptroller's [www.texas Transparency.org](http://www.texas Transparency.org) website and the listing will include links to Haslet's website and financial transparency information. This is the second year that the City has applied for and received a financial transparency award.



The main criteria for the awards includes having the city's budget, audit, and check register available online to the public. The information is to be up to date, easy to access and to search on the website. Some of the other recommended criteria for the award to be included on the website is contact information for city council members and key staff; municipal codes; past city council meeting agendas and minutes; detailed summary information about current bonded debt and repayment; and a link to the Comptroller's governmental transparency website. A complete list of the Comptroller's guidelines for the award is attached as is the award certificate.

Check out Haslet's financial transparency on our website at [www.Haslet.org](http://www.Haslet.org).



# Transparency Stars

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The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts  
awards the **City of Haslet** the  
**Traditional Finances Star**

for exemplary efforts in creating financial transparency around public services and spending decisions. The Transparency Stars program recognizes local governments across Texas that are striving to meet a high standard for financial transparency online. These efforts provide citizens with clear, consistent information about public spending in user-friendly formats.



August 19, 2016

## **Transparency Stars Traditional Finances Guidelines**

Follow the guidelines below and add the required documentation to your entity's website to qualify for a Traditional Finances Transparency Star. To apply for any of the other four Transparency Stars (Contracts and Procurement, Economic Development, Public Pensions or Debt Obligations), your entity must first receive the Traditional Finances Transparency Star.

The landscape for financial transparency has changed. Taxpayers are demanding more, be it in the form of downloadable datasets, new visual representations of information or even simple bulleted lists of key figures. Increased transparency through these means allows taxpayers to understand public services and spending decisions to a greater extent than ever before.

### **Finance Summary**

Your entity should post to the Web a summary and narrative overview including the following items for the most recently completed fiscal year, as well as explanations of terminology:

- Expenditures as total and per capita or per student
- Revenues from all entity funds expressed as total and per capita or per student amounts
- Total full-time equivalent positions for all personnel
- Revenues from property taxes as total and per capita or per student
- Revenues from sales taxes as total and per capita or per student

Note that you may wish to include additional pieces of data that provide context reflective of standards or conventions particular to the entity type. See the sidebar for an optional [form](#) you may use to complete the Summary section.

### **Visualizations**

Post data visualizations to your transparency page showing the following:

- Time trend for at least five years showing revenues and expenditures per capita or per student
- Time trend for at least five years showing property tax rate(s) per \$100 valuation

Note that you may wish to include explanations or subsets of these trends in the visualizations, or post additional visualizations that provide context reflective of standards or conventions particular to your entity type. See the sidebar for templates you may choose to use to create required visualizations. The visualizations must be posted on the page itself and must be – like all the required information on the transparency page or section – easy to view and to interpret.

### **Documents**

Post the following documents for easy download:

- **Budgets for last five fiscal years.** The adopted budgets for the current fiscal year and the four preceding fiscal years are required.
- **Annual financial reports (AFRs or CAFRs) for last five fiscal years.** Reports for the five most recently completed fiscal years audits are required.
  - To be current, the AFR must be posted within 12 months of the end of each fiscal year.

### **Downloadable Data**

Make the following available for download to aid in researching your entity's finances:

- **Raw format budget for the current fiscal year.** A budget posted in a tabular or spreadsheet format. PDF is not an accepted raw data format.

Raw format budget should:

- Parallel the budget required under the "Documents" section for the corresponding fiscal year;

- Identify by name the accounts and divisions of all monies held and/or funded;
- Allow users to perform analysis on the raw budget data;
- Show all revenues and expenditures within a local government's budget; and
- Show all combined accounts (enterprise funds, general fund, debt, etc).
- **Check registers for three fiscal years.** At least 3 years (i.e., 36 months) of consecutive check registers ending with the most current (no older than 90 days) check register are required. The Comptroller's office also recommends consolidating older check registers by fiscal year to simplify the posts. Check registers should:
  - include monthly, quarterly or semi-annual totals for all expenditures
  - be posted in a tabular or spreadsheet format (PDFs are not an accepted raw data format)
  - include fields for date, payee, amount, purpose for each entry in the register
  - include electronic fund transfers and payroll direct deposits, as well as bank drafts for bond or loan payments

See our [FAQs](#) for tips on posting your check registers.

### **Other Information**

Your transparency site should also include the following:

- General contact information such as address and phone number for local government
- Contact names, phone numbers and/or email addresses for elected officials
- Application and instructions for open records requests