
City Council Regular Meeting

DEPARTMENT: Finance

FROM: Michael Franklin, Deputy Director of Finance

MEETING: August 4, 2025

SUBJECT:

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide staff direction regarding the pursuit of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts' Transparency Stars Program, which recognizes local governments for going above and beyond in their transparency efforts. (Staff Contact: Michael Franklin, Deputy Director of Finance)

SUMMARY:

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts' Transparency Stars program recognizes local governments for going above and beyond in their transparency efforts. The program recognizes government entities that accomplish the following:

- Open their books not only in their traditional finances, but also in the areas of contracts and procurement, economic development, public pensions, debt obligations, and Open Government and Compliance; and
- Provide clear and meaningful financial information not only by posting financial documents, but also through summaries, visualizations, downloadable data, and other relevant information.

A government entity can apply for one or more Stars, up to a maximum of six. Entities must first receive a Traditional Finances Star, but may apply for Stars in up to five other areas:

- Contracts and Procurement;
- Economic Development;
- Public Pensions;
- Debt Obligations; and
- Open Government and Compliance

The program recognizes the remarkable breadth and depth of information presented for each specific Transparency Star awarded, making each star a prestigious achievement. The Stars stand on their own and are not awarded along a continuum or with an expectation that entities should attain six out of six stars.

Traditionally, the City of Burleson only posted the check register, budget, and annual financial reports on its website. To mitigate security risks and threats, the City began truncating the names of payees on the check register, similar to other recipients of the Transparency Stars. This change allowed us to apply for and receive the Traditional Finances Star, which was successfully awarded to the City on June 30, 2025. In July, we posted all the necessary data on our website for the Debt Obligations Star.

For more detailed information, please refer to the attached Frequently Asked Questions document.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Council discuss the status of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts' Transparency Stars program application and provide direction regarding the next steps in the program.

PRIOR ACTION/INPUT (Council, Boards, Citizens):

On July 23, 2025, the Policy and Valuation Committee received a report on the progress of the Transparency Stars Program and supported the pursuit of the additional stars in the program.

REFERENCE:

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

STAFF CONTACT:

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