



City of San Marcos

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NEWS

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Comptroller: City's Financial Transparency Good as 'Gold'

The City of San Marcos has received the 2011 Gold Leadership Circle Award from the Texas Comptroller's Office for its online financial transparency.



Texas Comptroller
Leadership Circle

“Gold” is the highest honor in the Leadership Circle Award Program, which was started in 2009 to recognize local governments across Texas that are striving to meet a high standard for financial transparency online.

“This is a special honor that reflects our dedication to open government,” said Mayor Daniel Guerrero. “These efforts are based on suggestions from citizens and we will continue to build on our accomplishments.”

The City posts on its web page all four major criteria for the award (adopted budget, annual financial report, check register and a dedicated financial transparency webpage) and nine out of 12 minor criteria:

- Local government contact information
- Contact information for elected officials
- Public information request information
- Easy access to financial documents
- Budgets for three fiscal years
- Annual financial reports for three years
- Check/expense registers that are searchable and descriptive
- Current tax rates

“Being an open book financially is a cornerstone of the City’s overall transparency efforts,” said Director of Finance Steve Parker. “I’m proud of the efforts that staff members in the Finance and Information Technology departments have made toward making our financial information easily accessible to our citizens.”

The award comes on the heels of the City Council's recent passage of Open Government Guidelines developed by the joint efforts of city staff and citizens.

Adopted on Oct 18, the guidelines were initially proposed by Open San Marcos, a community organization founded by the late Steve Harvey that advocates greater transparency in local government. City staff worked with Open San Marcos to develop the guidelines.

The guidelines cover documentation and records management, financial transparency, using understandable language in codes, agendas and ordinances, citizen participation, use of wide variety of media, public notice, outreach initiatives for City Council and Planning & Zoning meetings, training staff, campaign finance reports, preventing fraud and abuse of public resources and other issues.

The City's financial information and Open Government Guidelines may be found on the city's home page at www.sanmarcostx.gov and clicking the "Financial Transparency" button or directly visiting www.sanmarcostx.gov/departments/finance/transparency.html

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