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## Town of Westlake Honored for Transparency

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Photo via Town of Westlake Facebook page

Opening financial books to the public, providing clear and consistent pictures of spending, and sharing information with taxpayers in a user-friendly format are some of the reasons the Town of Westlake was one of the first four cities to recently earn the prestigious 2016 Texas Comptroller’s Transparency Star for Traditional Finances. Other inaugural municipalities receiving this award include the cities of Carrollton, Andrews, and Abernathy and others have now followed suit.

The Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts originally launched the Leadership Circle Program to recognize local governments across Texas that strived to meet a high standard for financial transparency online. The Town of Westlake received this award in March 2014 and March 2015. However, in January the program was discontinued and replaced with the Transparency Stars Program, a more rigorous program recognizing local governments for going above and beyond in their transparency efforts.

The program recognizes government entities that not only open their books in traditional finances, but also in the areas of contracts and procurement, economic development, public pensions and debt obligations. Entities also must provide clear and meaningful financial information by posting financial documents with summaries, visualizations, and downloadable data.

Receiving this award aligns well with several of the Town’s value statements of being fiscally responsible and operating a transparent, integrity-driven government.

“The Town of Westlake strives to place an emphasis on transparency,” said Debbie Piper, director of finance. “It is our commitment that the Town of Westlake’s financial information is readily accessible and available for our citizens.”

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