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Mackinac Center recognizes city's effort

n Novi only second city in state to post public spending online

BY NATHAN MUELLER • STAFF WRITER • JULY 2, 2009

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Novi City Council member Andrew Mutch said he has always been a big believer in transparency and accountability when it comes to spending money.

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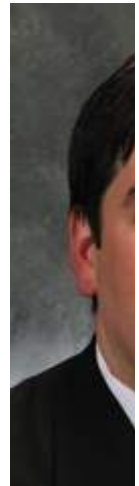
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So it's no surprise that Mutch was behind an effort to put the city's public spending [information](#) available online for residents to see how their money is being spent.

"I think it's extremely important from the viewpoint of government, because it helps the communication process," Mutch said. "The more information we put out there, the more informed our residents can be. By opening ourselves up, we are making it clear to the residents and taxpayers that we are willing to let them see what we are doing."

Novi is in the minority when it comes to posting its check register online, as only one other city, Flint, and 42 public school districts in the state, including



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Novi Community Schools, do so.

The city started posting its check registers online last fall, but recently improved the Web site to give people easier access.

As a result of its actions, the city was recognized by the Mackinac Center for Public Policy as a leader in government transparency. The Mackinac Center is currently trying to get everyone on board with this

practice, and information about all those currently involved can be found at www.showmichiganthemoney.org.

"It's a great way to [connect](#) with the community and let them know everything is above board," director Kenneth Braun said. "This is a good government thing and we want to praise them for doing it right."

Mutch said another reason he pushed for the streamlining of information was because the city has started to do projects with stimulus money and he wanted residents to be able to see how the money is being used and keep them up-to-date on the status of those projects.

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