DAS
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

HB 3035 (2013) Response
Transparency Website Plan

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Prepared by
The Department of Administrative Services

Prepared for
The Oregon Legislative Assembly
Per House Bill 3035 (2013)

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History of Transparency Website

The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) was directed to create a transparency website by HB 2500 (2009) within current agency resources. Since the creation of the website there have been several bills passed requesting additional information be made available on the website. To meet the requirements of previous legislative mandates DAS has created a website with information provided by entities owning the needed data, and links to information maintained in other systems and on other websites. In many cases, DAS does not maintain the information requested and has to work with many state and local partners to gain access to the data for the website. Currently, maintaining the site is done by one individual in the DAS Office of the Chief Information Officer; this individual is responsible for the transparency website in addition to other regular full-time duties. Despite limited resources to create and maintain the transparency website, Oregon was ranked second in the nation in providing online access to government spending data, by U.S. PIRG's "Follow the Money 2014" report.

HB3035 Requirements

During the 2013 legislative session, HB 3035 was passed requiring DAS to develop a plan to add additional contracting information to the transparency website, including information for school districts and community colleges. This report is intended to meet the requirements of HB 3035.

Current State of Transparency Website

Maintaining the transparency website is a manual and time-consuming process. Currently one staff person is assigned to manage and maintain the transparency website, in addition to their regular duties. Managing and maintaining the website consists of many different activities and tasks. An example of some of the primary duties are included in the table below:

Oversight	Acquiring Information	Website Updates
• Handling Transparency Oregon Advisory Commission requests. • Analyzing house and senate bills for required changes to the website. • Creating and updating website data dictionaries. This provides a simplified format that explains what types of data are needed and the format to be used. • Responding to inquires about the transparency website.	Requesting information from more than 30 individual sources, creates many challenges including: • Initial and follow up contact to get required information from data owning entities. • In some cases, educating data owning entities about the transparency website to ensure data provided adequately meets intent of associated statutes. • Difficulty getting the needed information in some cases, due to lack of succession planning and knowledge transfer in data owning entities.	• Updating website navigation, structure, format, layout (narratives, links to internal and external pages, and documents, etc). • Updating website content with data and information received from various data owning entities. • Updating/editing other transparency website sub-sets, such as the Oregon Public Meeting Manager Application. • Ensuring information contained on the website is updated and meets current requirements, including a limited data quality review.

At this time, information is submitted from contributors via email or other electronic means, as data owners are currently unable to load information to the website themselves. Currently, most data must be updated during the end of the calendar year, which creates a large burden in both acquiring information and updating

the information on the website. The manual approach to maintaining the website combined with the lack of staff time available leaves little time for a higher level review and assessment of information being added.

In addition to the manual nature of receiving and posting data to the transparency website there are also limitations in what data and data sets are readily available. The State of Oregon operates many legacy systems. These systems hold and maintain a vast amount of data and information, but were developed long before the transparency website. In many cases these systems do not have the reporting capabilities needed to readily report data and information. Overtime, system work arounds have been developed to assist agencies with day-to-day data needs, this further increases the complexity of getting and sharing data and information across the enterprise in a standardized format for the transparency website. Enterprise initiatives and planning projects are currently being launched that will start the process of updating many of these legacy systems. As these systems are upgraded, more data will likely be available to meet reporting requirements.

REPORTING PROCESS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

To gain an understanding of the website and the work necessary to meet the requirements discussed in HB 3035, the DAS Office of the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and the Chief Information Office (CIO) worked with external stakeholders. In addition to meeting the requests contained in HB 3035, the DAS Office of the COO and the CIO determined that this provided an opportunity to look at the website as a whole and work to develop a plan that included stakeholder identified opportunities for improvement. Stakeholders involved in discussion about the website, included: members of the Transparency Oregon Advisory Commission, Governor's Office representative, union representatives, and public interest groups.

Discussions with stakeholders revealed they were generally pleased with the amount of information currently available on the transparency website. However, there were several trends identified relating to what stakeholders would like to see in terms of functionality on the website in the future:

- Increased ability to conduct basic and advanced searches for data and information, available throughout the transparency website.
- More information from local governments.
- Create a site that is more like ORESTAR.
- More information about outcomes when using public funds.
- Need for consistency in the way information is reported and presented – making it easier for users to understand.
- More timely information – as data currently provided for posting is often a year in arrears, there is often a lag in the data and information posted.

Based on conversations it was clear there are two types of users that access the transparency website: individuals and organizations or advocacy groups. The latter group generally review information available to formulate opinions or reports about the data presented. It is important that DAS keeps these groups in mind as updates and enhancements are considered.

As of the date of this report, for the 2015 legislative session three House Bills and two Senate Bills have been introduced, containing requirements for additional information and/or links to be added to the transparency website. DAS will continue to monitor the bills as they move through the session to ensure any requests made are included in future plans for the transparency website.

FUTURE STATE ANALYSIS – NEEDS AND OUTCOMES

Funding Continued at Status Quo Level

Without funding DAS will continue to maintain the website in its current format. The website will continue to function as it does currently without making any enhancements to increase functionality, the addition of new data items, or features.

Limited Additional Funding and Resources

The current website exists through a strategic sourcing contract with NicUSA. As part of this agreement and for no additional contract costs, the website can be redesigned to increase ease of use and add some elements to enhance search ability. Though there wouldn't be additional cost on the contract, it is estimated this effort would take approximately 500 additional staff hours, spread over ten to twelve months, to work on the new design elements, manage the current website data for the transition, and move all of the existing data into the newly redesigned web portal. The additional staff hours would cost DAS approximately $14,000.

Ability to Meet Current and Future Needs of Stakeholders

One of the biggest barriers to getting data and information on the transparency website, besides adequate resources, is the existing limitations of current state legacy information systems. Without significant upgrades to these legacy systems, there are some elements of data and information that stakeholders would like to see that will not be available for presentation through the transparency website. As major legacy systems are replaced, (i.e. human resource, finance, procurement, etc.) the availability of data and information for the transparency website will likely increase.

HB3035 RESPONSE

Below is a response to each element of data requested in HB3035 SECTION 1.

(a) Information on expenditures made by state agencies under contracts, including the text of contracts and information on the work to be performed, or products or services to be provided, under the contracts.

> DAS does not currently collect information on payments made on a contract by contract basis. Each agency is responsible for ensuring contract payments made are within the terms of the contract language. Gathering the information from individual agencies, standardizing it for usability on the website, and maintaining it for future use is not feasible within current resources at DAS. DAS does collect vendor reported volume sales reports from vendors participating in statewide price agreements and could make those available on the transparency website, but would need to work to update the format of information reported for consistency and ease of use by transparency site users.

> At this time there is not a feasible way to collect contract text to be placed on the transparency website. Per OAR 125-246-0500 the Oregon Procurement Information System (ORPIN) is the official publication forum for state Procurement notices and advertisements. Though some agencies do upload full contracts into ORPIN there is no simple method to extract this information from the system. The resulting data and information at best, would be a series of PDF documents that would likely be unsearchable by users and take up a great deal of space on the transparency website. The state contracting information already provided on the website does have a field for award title and in most cases this field gives a high level explanation of the work to be performed. Users of the website can reference the information that is already available to make a public records request for the full text of the contract.

(b) Information regarding the terms of state agency contracts that is listed by categories, such as contracts not yet completed and anticipated completion dates, in a manner that allows persons accessing the website to search each category separately.

> The state contracting information already provided on the transparency website when selected, opens in a data viewer on data.oregon.gov and allows the user to easily sort and search through the data. They may also download the data set in a wide range of formats (i.e. csv, pdf, Excel (xls), etc.) The information provided includes, but is not limited to: agency name, award title, award type, contractor information, original start date, amendment date, anticipated expiration date, original award value, amendment value, and total award value.

(c) Information regarding vendors and other contractors under state agency contracts that is listed by categories, such as, city, state, and zip code of a vendor's or contractor's residence, in a manner that allows persons accessing the website to search each category separately.

> The state contracting information provided on the transparency website already contains the data elements requested above. The information when selected, opens in a data viewer on data.oregon.gov and allows the user to easily sort and search through the data. They may also download the data set in a wide range of formats (i.e. csv, pdf, Excel (xls), etc.).

(d) Findings or determinations under ORS 279B.030 and 279B.036, and supporting documentation for those findings or determinations.

> Work related to these determinations is not currently completed or maintained by DAS, they are performed on an as needed basis by agencies. There are approximately 400 – 600 determinations made in any given fiscal year. Due to the volume of determinations it is not feasible for DAS to collect and post this information to the transparency website at this time.

(e) Annual revenue, annual expenditures and contracting and subcontracting information for school districts and community colleges.

> The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) currently collects data and maintains a website that includes information related to school district revenues and expenditures (http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=1722). The Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) department collects similar revenue and expenditure data and information for Oregon's community colleges. This data and information collected by CCWD is not currently available online to the public, but could be added to the transparency website.

> At this time neither ODE nor CCWD collect information related to contracting and subcontracting information for school districts or community colleges. Based on conversations with the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) and the Oregon Community Colleges Association (OCCA) it appears this data and information could be made available within current resources if parameters were set to limit the scope of contracting information to be reported. Both groups agreed providing information on contracts that are competitively solicited through a formal procurement process with a value over $150,000 would create an additional workload, but could be feasible within current resources. DAS would recommend this as a first step in gaining access to this information. DAS will need to work with ODE, CCWD, OSBA, and OCCA to develop a reporting template and process for submitting information to the transparency website. This process should be completed by the end of 2015, allowing users of the site to see school district and community college contracting information in early 2016.

<div style="background-color:gray">**CONCLUSIONS**</div>

DAS can meet several of the requests of HB 3035 with the engagement and active assistance of data owners. This work will require the development of new reporting mechanisms for the school districts and community colleges, which can be completed within their current resources given an appropriate set of parameters setting limits on what information will be reported. Overall, the inability to provide the data and information requested in many situations, is primarily due to the use of legacy systems that make data and information difficult to report and share.

DAS believes the transparency website is an important tool that gives citizens and other interested parties access to information about state government. Without additional resources DAS will continue to meet expectations as best it can. Below is a potential plan of action to upgrade and update the transparency website and associated resources.

Plan Phase	Work Performed	Resource Needs
Limited Enhancements		
Initial – Creation of New Transparency Web Portal	**Redesign of the current website** through the current strategic sourcing contract with NicUSA. This redesign will create a web portal that will provide some of the functionality users of the website want to see. DAS will need additional time and resources to assist in the redesign, management, and migration of the existing transparency data and information into a new web portal.	This project will likely require an additional 500 staff hours, spread over ten to twelve months, costing approximately $14,000.
Major Enhancements		
Mid-Term – Gap Analysis	**Conduct a gap analysis**, this would be done through DAS and/or a project contact/consultant. At high level this work would include working with agencies, sponsors, and customer/users to clearly define what data is currently available and in what format; what data is needed now, and in the future (format); processes for how data can be accessed for inclusion on the website, and overall, identification of bottlenecks and limitations	This work, due to the amount of analysis and level of stakeholder engagement, would likely take two years and require additional staffing resources.
Long-Term – Upgraded Legacy Systems	**Creating a checkbook level view** of transparency will require upgrades to several enterprise legacy systems, including but not limited to: • Human Resources • Financial • Procurement	The resource needs for upgrading legacy systems go beyond the scope of the transparency website, but the website would benefit greatly from these changes.

By dedicating additional resources DAS would have the ability to add limited enhancements. This would create a web portal with increased functionality, features, and a more user-friendly look and feel.