



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 12, 2016

Ms. Nneka E. Kanu  
Assistant City Attorney  
Legal Department  
City of Houston  
P.O. Box 368  
Houston, Texas 77001-0368

OR2016-15743

Dear Ms. Kanu:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 617854 (GC No. 23349).

The City of Houston (the "city") received a request for the winning proposal related to a request for proposals for e-discovery.<sup>1</sup> Although you take no position with respect to the public availability of the requested information, you state the proprietary interests of TEQSYS, Inc. might be implicated. Accordingly, you notified TEQSYS of the request and of its right to submit arguments to this office explaining why its information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305 (permitting interested third party to submit to attorney general reasons why requested information should not be released); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (determining statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received arguments from TEQSYS. Thus, TEQSYS has not demonstrated it has a protected proprietary interest in any of the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110(a)-(b); Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent

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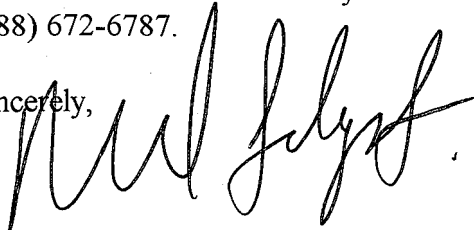
<sup>1</sup>We note the city failed to comply with its deadlines under section 552.301 of the Government Code; however, third party-interests provide a compelling reason for non-disclosure. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302; Open Records Decision No. 150 at 2 (1977).

disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the city may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interests TEQSYS may have in the information. As you raise no exceptions to disclosure, the city must release the submitted information.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at [http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl\\_ruling\\_info.shtml](http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml), or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Neal Falgoust  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

NF/bhf

Ref: ID# 617854

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

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TEQSYS  
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Austin, Texas 78757  
(w/o enclosures)