



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 19, 2016

Ms. Angela Hough
Assistant General Counsel
North Texas Tollway Authority
P.O. Box 260729
Plano, Texas 75026

OR2016-18817

Dear Ms. Hugh:

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# 623673 (PIR No. 2016-01605).

The North Texas Tollway Authority (the "authority") received a request for two specified bids. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Bob Tomes Ford and Friendly Chevrolet & Isuzu. Accordingly, you notified these third parties of the request for information and of each company's right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

We note 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 either of the third parties. Thus, the third parties have not demonstrated the companies have protected proprietary interests in any of the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110(a)-(b); Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent 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 authority may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interests either of the third parties may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the authority 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, 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,


Britni Ramirez
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

BR/bhf

Ref: ID# 623673

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)