



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 6, 2017

Mr. Micah King  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Austin  
P. O. Box 1088  
Austin, Texas 78767-8828

OR2017-00475

Dear Mr. King:

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# 641685.

The City of Austin (the "city") received a request for all internal evaluation documents and bid responses for a specified awarded bid. The city has released some information. The city does not take a position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under the Act.<sup>1</sup> However, the city states, and provides documentation showing, it notified RPD Systems, LLC ("RPD") and Verint Systems, Inc. ("Verint") of the city's receipt of the request for information and of their right to submit arguments to this office as to why the requested information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 at 3 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act 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 under section 552.305(d) of the Government Code to submit its reasons, if any, as to why requested information relating to it should be withheld from

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<sup>1</sup>We note, and the city acknowledges, the city did not comply with section 552.301 of the Government Code in requesting this decision. *See* Gov't Code § 552.301(b), (e). Nonetheless, because third-party interests are at stake, we will consider whether the submitted information must be withheld under the Act based on third-party interests. *See id.* §§ 552.007, .302, .352.

disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, RPD and Verint have not submitted to this office any reasons explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Thus, we have no basis for concluding the submitted information constitutes proprietary information of any third party, and the city may not withhold any portion of it on that basis. *See* 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.

We note some of the materials at issue may be protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; *see* Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the city must release the submitted information; however, any information protected by copyright may only be released in accordance with copyright law.

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,



Kelly McWethy  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

KSM/eb

Ref: ID# 641685

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

2 Third Parties  
(w/o enclosures)