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ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 2, 2017

Mr. Ryan Pittman
Counsel for the City of Frisco
Abernathy Roeder Boyd Hullett
1700 Redbud Boulevard, Suite 300
McKinney, Texas 75070-1210

OR2017-02375

Dear Mr. Pittman:

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# 644211 (Reference# G014269-110816).

The City of Frisco (the "city"), which you represent, received a request for building department records concerning a specified address. Although you take no position as to whether the requested information is excepted under the Act, you state release of some of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of specified third parties. Accordingly, you inform us, and provide documentation demonstrating, you notified Childress Engineering Services, Inc.; TrimJoist Corporation; and Henley Johnston & Associates of the request for information and of their right to submit arguments stating 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); 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.

We note 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) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from

any of the specified third parties explaining why their information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude any of these third parties has a protected proprietary interest in any of the requested information. *See id.* § 552.110; 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 city may not withhold the requested information on the basis of any proprietary interest the specified third parties may have in the information.

We note some of the submitted information 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. Therefore, the city must release the submitted information; however, any information that is subject to copyright may be released only 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, 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,



Ian Lancaster
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

IML/sb

Ref: ID# 644211

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

3 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)