



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 28, 2017

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

OR2017-17013

Dear Mr. Brown:

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# 668840 (PIR# 34412).

The City of Austin (the "city") received a request for all diversion plans for businesses at a specified location. We understand the city is withholding e-mail addresses of members of the public under section 552.137 of the Government Code pursuant to Open Records Decision No. 684 (2009).¹ Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Sanchez Restaurant Group and Moorison-Moore Properties, Ltd. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified the interested third parties of the request for information and of their right to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue 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 the 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 under section 552.305(d) of the Government Code to submit

¹Open Records Decision No. 684 is a previous determination to all governmental bodies authorizing them to withhold certain information, including an e-mail address of a member of the public under section 552.137 of the Government Code, without the necessity of requesting an attorney general decision.

its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from the third parties explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude these parties have protected proprietary interests in the submitted 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 any portion of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest the third parties may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure are raised, the submitted information must be released.

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,



Jahanna Ward
Attorney
Open Records Division

JW/bw

Ref: ID# 668840

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

2 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)