



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

December 8, 2017

Ms. Leslie Jean-Pierre  
Assistant City Attorney  
Office of the City Attorney  
City of El Paso  
P.O. Box 1890  
El Paso, Texas 79950-1890

OR2017-27894

Dear Ms. Jean-Pierre:

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# 687522 (ORR# 17-1044-1093).

The City of El Paso (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified request for quotes. The city states it will release some of the requested information. Although the city takes no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, the city states release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of the Big Cheese Rodent Factory (the "Big Cheese"). Accordingly, the city states, and provides documentation showing, it notified the Big Cheese of the request for information and of the 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 the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted arguments and 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) to submit 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

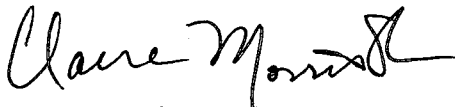
Big Cheese explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude the Big Cheese has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial 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 the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest the Big Cheese may have in the information.

Some of the submitted information is subject to section 552.136 of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> Section 552.136 provides, “Notwithstanding any other provision of [the Act], a credit card, debit card, charge card, or access device number that is collected, assembled, or maintained by or for a governmental body is confidential.” Gov’t Code § 552.136(b); *see id.* § 552.136(a) (defining “access device”). Accordingly, the city must withhold the routing and bank account numbers within the submitted information under section 552.136 of the Government Code. The city must release the remaining 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,



Claire V. Morris Sloan  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

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<sup>1</sup>The Office of the Attorney General will raise a mandatory exception on behalf of a governmental body, but ordinarily will not raise other exceptions. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 481 (1987), 480 (1987), 470 (1987).

Ref: ID# 687522

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party  
(w/o enclosures)