



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 31, 2018

Ms. Leslie A. Whitten
Assistant City Attorney
City of College Station
P.O. Box 9960
College Station, Texas 77842

OR2018-02176

Dear Ms. Whitten:

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# 693196 (Ref. No. A17-001596).

The City of College Station (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified request for proposals. You state you released some information to the requestor. Although you take no position regarding whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure, you state its release may implicate the proprietary interests of Duncan Parking Technologies, Inc.; Tyler Technologies; and United Public Safety. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified these interested third parties of the request and their right to submit arguments to this office. *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.

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 id.* § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this ruling, we have not received comments from any of the interested third parties. Thus, we have no basis to conclude any of the interested third parties has a protected proprietary interest in 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 city may not withhold any of the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest any of the interested third parties may have in the information.

Section 552.130 of the Government Code provides information relating to a motor vehicle operator's license, driver's license, motor vehicle title or registration, or personal identification document issued by an agency of this state or another state or country is excepted from public release.¹ See Gov't Code § 552.130. The submitted information contains motor vehicle record information. However, we are unable to determine whether the information at issue constitutes actual motor vehicle record information for purposes of section 552.130, or whether it is fictitious motor vehicle record information created as part of a bid proposal. Therefore, we rule conditionally. To the extent the submitted motor vehicle record information constitutes actual motor vehicle record information, the city must withhold it under section 552.130 of the Government Code. To the extent the submitted motor vehicle record information consists of fictitious motor vehicle record information, then the city may not withhold it on that ground.

We note some of the remaining information appears to 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.

In summary, to the extent the submitted motor vehicle record information constitutes actual motor vehicle record information, the city must withhold it under section 552.130 of the Government Code. The city must release the remaining information; however, any information subject to 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.

¹The 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).

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meredith L. Coffman', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Meredith L. Coffman
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MLC/tdw

Ref: ID# 693196

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

3 Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)