



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 19, 2019

Ms. Courtney Alvarez
City Attorney
City of Kingsville
P.O. Box 1458
Kingsville, Texas 78364

OR2019-04621

Dear Ms. Alvarez:

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# 750856 (Ref. No. 2018-1215).

The City of Kingsville (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to the city's cellular tower leases. The city states it has released some information to the requestor. 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 GTP Acquisition Partners II, LLC ("GTP").¹ Accordingly, the city states, and provides documentation showing, it notified GTP 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 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 GTP explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no

¹We note the city failed to comply with section 552.301(b) of the Government Code in requesting a ruling; however, the interest of a third party can provide a compelling reason to withhold information sufficient to overcome the presumption of openness caused by a failure to comply with section 552.301. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301, .302. Thus, we will consider any submitted third party arguments.

basis to conclude GTP 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 GTP may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the city must release the submitted 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, 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,



Michelle Garza
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

MG/gw

Ref: ID# 750856

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

c: Third Party
(w/o enclosures)