



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 15, 2019

Ms. Roberta A. Brito  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of El Paso  
P.O. Box 1890  
El Paso, Texas 79950-1890

OR2019-32320

Dear Ms. Brito:

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# 796863 (City's Case No.: 19-1007-2499).

The City of El Paso (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to particular contracts for a specified year. Although the city takes no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of CoStar Realty Information, Inc. ("CoStar"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified CoStar of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted 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.

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 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 CoStar explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude CoStar 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 CoStar 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 <https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/what-expect-after-ruling-issued> or call the OAG's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Public Information Act may be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the OAG, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Erin Groff  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

EMG/rm

Ref: ID# 796863

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party  
(w/o enclosures)