



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 22, 2019

Ms. Brittany Rodriguez  
Office of Procurement Services  
City of Dallas  
1500 Marilla Street, Room 3FN  
Dallas, Texas 75201

OR2019-33163

Dear Ms. Rodriguez:

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# 798170 (ORR# C008227).

The City of Dallas (the "city") received a request for information related to request for proposals number BX1906. 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 True North Consulting Group ("True North"). Accordingly, the city states, and provides documentation showing, it notified True North 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 received comments from True North. We have reviewed the submitted arguments and the submitted information.

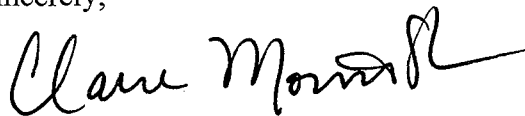
Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information that, if released, would give advantage to a competitor or bidder." Gov't Code § 552.104(a). A private third party may invoke this exception. *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831 (Tex. 2015). The "test under section 552.104 is whether knowing another bidder's [or competitor's information] would be an advantage, not whether it would be a decisive advantage." *Id.* at 841. True North states it has competitors. In addition, True North states release of some of its information would cause harm to its competitive interests and would give an advantage to its competitors. For many years, this office concluded the terms of a contract, and especially the pricing of a winning bidder, are public and generally not excepted from disclosure. Gov't Code § 552.022(a)(3) (contract involving receipt or expenditure of public funds expressly made public); Open Records Decision Nos. 541 at 8 (1990) (public has interest in knowing terms of contract with state agency), 514 (1988) (public has interest in knowing prices charged by government contractors), 494 (1988)

(requiring balancing of public interest in disclosure with competitive injury to company); *see generally* Freedom of Information Act Guide & Privacy Act Overview, 219 (2000) (federal cases applying analogous Freedom of Information Act reasoning that disclosure of prices charged government is a cost of doing business with government). However, now, pursuant to *Boeing*, section 552.104 is not limited to only ongoing competitive situations, and a third party need only show release of its competitively sensitive information would give an advantage to a competitor even after a contract is executed. *Boeing*, 466 S.W.3d at 841. After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find True North has established the release of the information at issue would give advantage to a competitor or bidder. Thus, we conclude the city may withhold True North's information at issue, which we marked, under section 552.104(a) of the Government Code.<sup>1</sup> 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 <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,



Claire V. Morris Sloan  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

CVMS/mo

Ref: ID# 798170

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

Third Party  
(w/o enclosures)

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<sup>1</sup> As our ruling is dispositive for this information, we need not address the remaining arguments against its disclosure.