



KEN PAXTON  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 26, 2019

Ms. Deborah Lynne Klein  
Deputy City Attorney  
City of San Antonio  
100 West Houston Street, 18th Floor  
San Antonio, Texas 78205

OR2019-33526

Dear Ms. Klein:

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# 798332 (COSA File No. W281671-090419).

The City of San Antonio (the "city") received a request for (1) eight categories of information pertaining to a specified job position, (2) communications and personnel information pertaining to a named individual in a specified job position, and (3) communications between specified individuals and entities pertaining to the requestor's lawsuit against the city. You state the city does not have information responsive to the first category of the request.<sup>1</sup> The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.103 of the Government Code. Additionally, the city states it notified the San Antonio Economic Development Corporation (the "EDC") of the request

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<sup>1</sup> The Act does not require a governmental body to release information that did not exist when a request for information was received or to prepare new information in response to a request. See *Econ. Opportunities Dev. Corp. v. Bustamante*, 562 S.W.2d 266, 267-68 (Tex. Civ. App.—San Antonio 1978, writ dismissed); Open Records Decision Nos. 605 at 2 (1992), 452 at 3 (1986), 362 at 2 (1983).

for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue should not be released.<sup>2</sup> *See* Gov't Code § 552.304 (interested party may submit comments stating why information should or should not be released). We have considered the claimed exception and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, we note the submitted information contains a media release. We note section 552.007 of the Government Code provides if a governmental body voluntarily releases information to any member of the public, the governmental body may not withhold such information from further disclosure unless its public release is expressly prohibited by law or the information is confidential under law. *See id.* § 552.007; Open Records Decision No. 518 at 3 (1989); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 400 (1983) (governmental body may waive right to claim permissive exceptions to disclosure under the Act, but it may not disclose information made confidential by law). Accordingly, pursuant to section 552.007, the city may not now withhold any previously released information unless its release is expressly prohibited by law or the information is confidential under law. Although the city raises section 552.103 of the Government Code for the information at issue, this section does not prohibit the release of information or make information confidential. *See Dallas Area Rapid Transit v. Dallas Morning News*, 4 S.W.3d 469, 475-76 (Tex. App.—Dallas 1999, no pet.) (governmental body may waive section 552.103); Open Records Decision Nos. 665 at 2 n.5 (2000) (discretionary exceptions generally), 663 at 5 (1999) (waiver of discretionary exceptions). Thus, the city may not withhold the previously released information, which we marked, under section 552.103 of the Government Code. Accordingly, the city must release the marked media release pursuant to section 552.007 of the Government Code.

Section 552.103 of the Government Code provides, in part, the following:

(a) Information is excepted from [required public disclosure] if it is information relating to litigation of a civil or criminal nature to which the state or a political subdivision is or may be a party or to which an officer or employee of the state or a political subdivision, as a consequence of the person's office or employment, is or may be a party.

...

(c) Information relating to litigation involving a governmental body or an officer or employee of a governmental body is excepted from disclosure under Subsection (a) only if the litigation is pending or reasonably

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<sup>2</sup> As of the date of this letter, we have not received any comments from the EDC explaining why any portion of the submitted information should not be released to the requestor.

<sup>3</sup> We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

anticipated on the date that the requestor applies to the officer for public information for access to or duplication of the information.

Gov't Code § 552.103(a), (c). A governmental body has the burden of providing relevant facts and documents to show the section 552.103(a) exception is applicable in a particular situation. The test for meeting this burden is a showing (1) litigation was pending or reasonably anticipated on the date the governmental body received the request for information, and (2) the information at issue is related to that litigation. *Univ. of Tex. Law Sch. v. Tex. Legal Found.*, 958 S.W.2d 479, 481 (Tex. App.—Austin 1997, orig. proceeding); *Heard v. Houston Post Co.*, 684 S.W.2d 210, 212 (Tex. App.—Houston [1st Dist.] 1984, writ ref'd n.r.e.); Open Records Decision No. 551 at 4 (1990). A governmental body must meet both prongs of this test for information to be excepted under section 552.103(a). See ORD 551.

The city states, and provides documentation showing, a lawsuit styled *In re City of San Antonio*, No. 2019CI10464, was pending against the city in the 224th Judicial District Court of Bexar County, Texas, when the city received the instant request for information. The city also states the information at issue is related to the pending lawsuit. Based upon these representations, the submitted documentation, and our review of the information at issue, we find litigation was pending when the city received this request for information, and the information at issue is related to the pending litigation for the purposes of section 552.103. Accordingly, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.103(a) of the Government Code.

Generally, however, once information has been obtained by all parties to the litigation through discovery or otherwise, no section 552.103(a) interest exists with respect to that information. Open Records Decision Nos. 349 (1982), 320 (1982). Thus, information that has either been obtained from or provided to the opposing parties in the pending litigation is not excepted from disclosure under section 552.103(a), and it must be disclosed. Further, the applicability of section 552.103(a) ends once the litigation has concluded. See Attorney General Opinion MW-575 (1982); see also Open Records Decision No. 350 at 3 (1982).

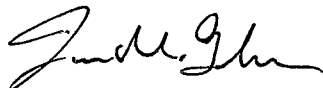
In summary, the city must release the marked media release pursuant to section 552.007 of the Government Code. The city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.103(a) of the Government Code.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James M. Graham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

James M. Graham  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JMG/gw

Ref: ID# 798332

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)