



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 3, 2020

Mr. Trenton M. Dietz  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Abilene  
P.O. Box 60  
Abilene, Texas 79604-0060

OR2020-19333

Dear Mr. Dietz:

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# 837797 (Ref. Nos. 20-675, 20-676).

The City of Abilene (the "city") received two requests from different requestors for certain agreements pertaining to a specified project. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.104, 552.110, 552.1101, 552.111, and 552.131 of the Government Code. You also state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of Abilene Convention Center Hotel Development Corporation (the "corporation"); Garfield Public/Private, LLC; Hilton Franchise Holding, LLC; and Lee Lewis Construction, Inc. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified these interested third parties of the request for information and of their right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.304 (interested party may submit comments stating why information should or should not be released), .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 the corporation. We have considered the submitted arguments and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that a governmental body demonstrates, if released, would "harm its interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular ongoing competitive situation or in a particular competitive situation where the governmental body establishes the situation at issue is set to reoccur or there is a specific and demonstrable intent to enter into the

competitive situation again in the future.” Gov’t Code § 552.104(a). 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.” *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831, 841 (Tex. 2015). After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find the city has established the release of the submitted information would harm its interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular ongoing competitive situation. Thus, we conclude the city may withhold the submitted information under section 552.104(a).<sup>1</sup>

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,

Meredith L. Coffman  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

MLC/be

Ref: ID# 837797

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestors  
(w/o enclosures)

4 Third Parties  
(w/o enclosures)

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