



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 20, 2020

Ms. Mary Kay Fischer
City Attorney
City of Friendswood
910 South Friendswood Drive
Friendswood, Texas 77546

OR2020-20993

Dear Ms. Fischer:

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# 841143 (ORR# W012508).

The City of Friendswood (the "city") received a request for a drawing of a specified area. The city claims the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception the city claims and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. This section encompasses information protected by other statutes. Although the city seeks to withhold the submitted information under federal copyright law, we note such law does not make information confidential. *See* Open Records Decision No. 660 at 5 (1999). A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; *see* Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit. Accordingly, the city may not withhold any of the information at issue under section 552.101 in conjunction with copyright law. As the city provides no further arguments, the city must release the submitted information, but may only release the copyrighted information in accordance with copyright law.

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/jm

Ref: ID# 841143

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)