



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

August 21, 2020

Mr. Austin R. Beck  
Counsel to the City of Olmos Park  
Davidson, Troilo, Ream & Garza, P.C.  
601 Northwest Loop 410, Suite 100  
San Antonio, Texas 78216-5511

OR2020-21034

Dear Mr. Beck:

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# 841880 (COOP Request Nos. 1A and 2B).

The City of Olmos Park (the "city"), which you represent, received two requests from the same requestor for information pertaining to two specified incidents.<sup>1</sup> You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.108 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note some of the submitted information was the subject of a previous request for information, as a result of which this office issued Open Records Letter No. 2019-00278 (2019). In that ruling, we determined the city may withhold the submitted information under section 552.108(a)(2) of the Government Code. We have no indication there has been any change in the law, facts, or circumstances on which the previous ruling was based. Accordingly, we conclude the city may rely on Open Records Letter No. 2019-00278 as a previous determination and withhold the information we have indicated in accordance with

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<sup>1</sup> You inform us the city sent the requestor an estimate of charges pursuant to section 552.2615 of the Government Code. *See* Gov't Code § 552.2615. The estimate of charges required the requestor to provide a deposit for payment of anticipated costs under section 552.263 of the Government Code. *See id.* § 552.263(a). You also inform us the city received the required deposit on June 5, 2020. *See id.* § 552.263(e) (if governmental body requires deposit or bond for anticipated costs pursuant to section 552.263, request for information is considered to have been received on date governmental body receives bond or deposit).

that ruling.<sup>2</sup> *See* Open Records Decision No. 673 (2001) (so long as law, facts, and circumstances on which prior ruling was based have not changed, first type of previous determination exists where requested information is precisely same information as was addressed in prior attorney general ruling, ruling is addressed to same governmental body, and ruling concludes that information is or is not excepted from disclosure).

Next, we note some of the remaining information consists of grand jury subpoenas and information obtained pursuant to the grand jury subpoenas. The judiciary is expressly excluded from the requirements of the Act. Gov't Code § 552.003(1)(B). This office has determined for purposes of the Act, a grand jury is a part of the judiciary, and therefore, not subject to the Act. *See* Open Records Decision No. 411 (1984). Further, records kept by a governmental body that is acting as an agent for a grand jury are considered records in the constructive possession of the grand jury and are also not subject to the Act. *See* Open Records Decisions Nos. 513 (1988), 411, 398 (1983). The fact that information collected or prepared by another person or entity is submitted to the grand jury does not necessarily mean such information is in the grand jury's constructive possession when the same information also is held in the other person's or entity's own capacity. Information held by another person or entity but not produced at the direction of the grand jury may well be protected under one of the Act's specific exceptions to disclosure, but such information is not excluded from the reach of the Act by the judiciary exclusion. *See* ORD 513. Thus, to the extent the city holds this information solely as an agent of the grand jury, such information is in the grand jury's constructive possession and is not subject to disclosure under the Act.<sup>3</sup> To the extent the city holds the information at issue in its own capacity and not solely as an agent of the grand jury, we will address your argument against its disclosure.

Section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure “[i]nformation held by a law enforcement agency or prosecutor that deals with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime . . . if . . . release of the information would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime[.]” Gov't Code § 552.108(a)(1). A governmental body claiming section 552.108(a)(1) must explain how and why the release of the requested information would interfere with law enforcement. *See id.* §§ 552.108(a)(1), .301(e)(1)(A); *see also Ex parte Pruitt*, 551 S.W.2d 706 (Tex. 1977). You state the remaining information pertains to an active criminal investigation and prosecution. Based on your representation and our review, we conclude release of the information at issue would interfere with the detection, investigation, or prosecution of crime. *See Houston Chronicle Publ'g Co. v. City of Houston*, 531 S.W.2d 177 (Tex. Civ. App.—Houston [14th Dist.] 1975) (court delineates law enforcement interests that are present in active cases), *writ ref'd n.r.e. per curiam*, 536 S.W.2d 559 (Tex. 1976). Thus, we conclude section 552.108(a)(1) is applicable to the remaining information.

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<sup>2</sup> As we are able to make this determination, we need not address your arguments against disclosure of this information.

<sup>3</sup> In this instance, as we are able to make this determination, we need not address your argument against disclosure of this information.

However, we note section 552.108 does not except from disclosure basic information about an arrested person, an arrest, or a crime. Gov't Code § 552.108(c). Basic information refers to the information held to be public in *Houston Chronicle*. See 531 S.W.2d at 186-88; Open Records Decision No. 127 (1976) (summarizing types of information considered to be basic information). Thus, with the exception of the basic information, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) of the Government Code.

In summary, the city may rely on Open Records Letter No. 2019-00278 as a previous determination and withhold the information we have indicated in accordance with that ruling. To the extent the city holds the submitted grand jury subpoenas and information obtained pursuant to the grand jury subpoenas solely as an agent of the grand jury, such information is in the grand jury's constructive possession and is not subject to disclosure under the Act. With the exception of the basic information, which must be released, the city may withhold the remaining information under section 552.108(a)(1) 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,

Gerald A. Arismendez  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

GAA/rm

Ref: ID# 841880

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)