



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

October 16, 2020

Mr. Michael Phelps  
Senior Paralegal  
Harris County Appraisal District  
P.O. Box 920975  
Houston, Texas 77292-0975

OR2020-26140

Dear Mr. Phelps:

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# 852166 (Ref. No. 20-4886).

The Harris County Appraisal District (the "district") received a request for the vehicle identification numbers for a specified account. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note the requestor only seeks the vehicle identification numbers from the specified account. Thus, only the vehicle identification numbers are responsive to the request for information. This ruling does not address the public availability of any information that is not responsive to the request, and the district need not release that information in response to this request.<sup>1</sup>

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. Section 22.27 of the Tax Code provides, in part, the following:

- (a) Rendition statements, real and personal property reports, attachments to those statements and reports, and other information the owner of property provides to the appraisal office in connection with the appraisal of the property, including income and expense information related to a property filed with an appraisal office and information voluntarily disclosed to an

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<sup>1</sup> As we are able to make this determination, we need not address your arguments against disclosure of this information.

appraisal office or the comptroller about real or personal property sales prices after a promise it will be held confidential, are confidential and not open to public inspection. The statements and reports and the information they contain about specific real or personal property or a specific real or personal property owner and information voluntarily disclosed to an appraisal office about real or personal property sales prices after a promise it will be held confidential may not be disclosed to anyone other than an employee of the appraisal office who appraises property except as authorized by Subsection (b) of this section.

Tax Code § 22.27(a). We understand the district is an “appraisal office” for purposes of section 22.27(a). The district states responsive information consists of information provided to the district by the property owner in connection with an appraisal of the property. The district states none of the exceptions in section 22.27(b) apply in this instance. *See id.* § 22.27(b). Based on the district’s representations and our review, we find the district must withhold the responsive information it marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 22.27 of the Tax Code.<sup>2</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,

Thana Hussaini  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

TSH/be

Ref: ID# 852166

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

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<sup>2</sup> As our ruling is dispositive, we need not address your remaining argument against disclosure of this information.