



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

November 9, 2020

Ms. Jessica Farrias
Records Coordinator
City of Carrollton
P.O. Box 110535
Carrollton, Texas 75011-0535

OR2020-28051

Dear Ms. Farrias:

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# 853768 (COC ID: 20849).

The City of Carrollton (the "city") received a request for information pertaining to a specified location. The city indicates it has released some information to the requestor. The city claims some of 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 public disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." Gov't Code § 552.101. Section 552.101 encompasses information protected by other statutes. As part of the Texas Homeland Security Act, sections 418.176 through 418.182 were added to chapter 418 of the Government Code. These provisions make confidential certain information related to terrorism. Section 418.181 provides,

Those documents or portions of documents in the possession of a governmental entity are confidential if they identify the technical details of particular vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure to an act of terrorism.

Id. § 418.181. The fact that information may relate to a governmental body's security concerns does not make the information *per se* confidential under the Texas Homeland Security Act. *See* Open Records Decision No. 649 at 3 (1996) (language of confidentiality provision controls scope of its protection). Furthermore, the mere recitation by a

governmental body of a statute's key terms is not sufficient to demonstrate the applicability of a claimed provision. As with any exception to disclosure, a governmental body asserting one of the confidentiality provisions of the Texas Homeland Security Act must adequately explain how the responsive records fall within the scope of the claimed provision. *See* Gov't Code § 552.301(e)(1)(A) (governmental body must explain how claimed exception to disclosure applies).

The city states some of the submitted information identifies technical details of the city's water, storm, and wastewater systems. The city asserts, and we agree, its water, storm, and wastewater systems are critical infrastructure. *See generally id.* § 421.001 (defining "critical infrastructure" to include "all public or private assets, systems, and functions vital to the security, governance, public health and safety, economy, or morale of the state or the nation"). The city also asserts release of the information at issue would reveal vulnerabilities in the city's water, storm, and wastewater systems. Based upon the city's representations and our review, we find the information at issue reveals the technical details of particular vulnerabilities of critical infrastructure to an act of terrorism. Accordingly, the city must withhold the information it marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 418.181 of the Government Code and release the remaining information.

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/jm

Ref: ID# 853768

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)