



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

January 14, 2022

Ms. Alexandra Manautou
Legal Counsel
Harris County Appraisal District
P.O. Box 920975
Houston, Texas 77292-0975

OR2022-01301

Dear Ms. Manautou:

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# 925483 (ORR# 21-5392).

The Harris County Appraisal District (the "district") received a request for information pertaining to a specified account number.¹ You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the claimed exception 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. 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

¹ You state the district sought and received clarification of the information requested. *See* Gov't Code § 552.222 (providing if request for information is unclear, governmental body may ask requestor to clarify request); *see also* *City of Dallas v. Abbott*, 304 S.W.3d 380, 387 (Tex. 2010) (holding that when a governmental entity, acting in good faith, requests clarification or narrowing of an unclear or overbroad request for information, the ten-day period to request an attorney general ruling is measured from the date the request is clarified or narrowed).

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). You state the district is an “appraisal office” for purposes of section 22.27(a). You also state the information at issue was provided by a property owner in connection with an appraisal of property. Further, you state the requestor has not provided the required authorization to establish a right of access to the information at issue; thus, the exceptions in section 22.27(b) do not apply in this instance. *See id.* § 22.27(b)(2). Based upon your representations and our review, we find the district must withhold the information we have marked under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 22.27 of the Tax Code. However, we find you have failed to demonstrate the remaining information is subject to section 22.27(a) of the Tax Code and it may not be withheld under section 552.101 of the Government Code on that basis. As you raise no further exceptions to disclosure, the district must 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,

Joseph Hoggatt
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JWH/be

Ref: ID# 925483

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)