



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

May 4, 2022

Ms. Kathryn Thiel
Counsel for the North Texas Municipal Water District
Lloyd, Gosselink, Rochelle & Townsend, P.C.
816 Congress Avenue, Suite 1900
Austin, Texas 78701

OR2022-12757

Dear Ms. Thiel:

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# 945325.

The North Texas Municipal Water District (the "district"), which you represent, received a request for information pertaining to a specified contract, a specified bid submission, and specified invoices. You claim the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.104 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.¹

Section 552.104(a) of the Government Code excepts from disclosure information that a governmental body demonstrates, if released, would "harm its interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular ongoing competitive situation or in a particular competitive situation where the governmental body establishes the situation at issue is set to reoccur or there is a specific and demonstrable intent to enter into the competitive situation again in the future." Gov't Code § 552.104(a). The "test under section 552.104 is whether knowing another bidder's [or competitor's information] would be an advantage, not whether it would be a decisive advantage." *Boeing Co. v. Paxton*, 466 S.W.3d 831, 841 (Tex. 2015). After review of the information at issue and consideration of the arguments, we find the district has established the release of the information at issue

¹ We assume the "representative sample" of records submitted to this office is truly representative of the requested records as a whole. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 499 (1988), 497 (1988). This open records letter does not reach, and therefore does not authorize the withholding of, any other requested records to the extent that those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

would harm its interests by providing an advantage to a competitor or bidder in a particular competitive situation that is set to reoccur or for which the district has demonstrated there is a specific and demonstrable intent to enter into the competitive situation again in the future. Thus, we conclude the district may withhold the submitted information under section 552.104(a) 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,

Jennifer Copeland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

JC/be

Ref: ID# 945325

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)