



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

November 16, 2007

Mr. Denis C. McElroy  
Assistant City Attorney  
City of Fort Worth  
1000 Throckmorton Street  
Fort Worth, Texas 76102

OR2007-15103

Dear Mr. McElroy:

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# 299265.

The City of Fort Worth (the "city") received a request for documents or maps showing water and sewer lines within five miles of the Texas Motor Speedway. You claim that the requested information is excepted from disclosure under section 552.101 of the Government Code. We have considered the exception you claim and reviewed the submitted information.

Section 552.101 of the Government Code excepts from disclosure "information considered to be confidential by law, either constitutional, statutory, or by judicial decision." 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 certain information related to terrorism confidential. Section 418.181 of the Government Code provides that "[t]hose 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." But the fact that information may relate to a governmental body's security concerns or emergency management activities 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).

You explain that the submitted information depicts the locations and dimensions of water and sewer lines near the Texas Motor Speedway. You argue that this information reveals vulnerabilities of the city's water and sewer infrastructure to acts of terrorism. You specifically assert the following:

A potential terrorist could use the responsive records to determine where to gain access to place explosives so as to wreak severe damage to Interstate 35. The records could also be used to determine where to attack the City's water and sanitary sewer lines (which are vital to public health) so as to cause the most damage. A terrorist could also determine where to plant explosives in the pipes during a race or other event and thereby endanger the lives and safety of thousands of individuals.

Based on your representations and our review of the submitted information, we find you have sufficiently demonstrated that the information at issue falls within the scope of section 418.181 of the Government Code. We therefore agree that the city must withhold the submitted information under section 552.101 of the Government Code in conjunction with section 418.181.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular records 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 records or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For example, governmental bodies are prohibited from asking the attorney general to reconsider this ruling. Gov't Code § 552.301(f). If the governmental body wants to challenge this ruling, the governmental body must appeal by filing suit in Travis County within 30 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.324(b). In order to get the full benefit of such an appeal, the governmental body must file suit within 10 calendar days. *Id.* § 552.353(b)(3), (c). If the governmental body does not appeal this ruling and the governmental body does not comply with it, then both the requestor and the attorney general have the right to file suit against the governmental body to enforce this ruling. *Id.* § 552.321(a).

If this ruling requires the governmental body to release all or part of the requested information, the governmental body is responsible for taking the next step. Based on the statute, the attorney general expects that, upon receiving this ruling, the governmental body

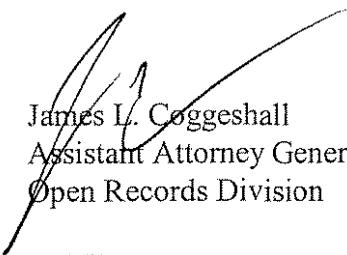
will either release the public records promptly pursuant to section 552.221(a) of the Government Code or file a lawsuit challenging this ruling pursuant to section 552.324 of the Government Code. If the governmental body fails to do one of these things, then the requestor should report that failure to the attorney general's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. The requestor may also file a complaint with the district or county attorney. *Id.* § 552.3215(e).

If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Texas Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

Please remember that under the Act the release of information triggers certain procedures for costs and charges to the requestor. If records are released in compliance with this ruling, be sure that all charges for the information are at or below the legal amounts. Questions or complaints about over-charging must be directed to Hadassah Schloss at the Office of the Attorney General at (512) 475-2497.

If the governmental body, the requestor, or any other person has questions or comments about this ruling, they may contact our office. Although there is no statutory deadline for contacting us, the attorney general prefers to receive any comments within 10 calendar days of the date of this ruling.

Sincerely,



James L. Coggeshall  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JLC/jh

Ref: ID# 299265

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Dave Lucas  
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(w/o enclosures)