



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS  
GREG ABBOTT

September 14, 2011

Mr. Eric D. Bentley  
Assistant General Counsel  
University of Houston System  
311 E. Cullen Building  
Houston, Texas 77204-2028

OR2011-13231

Dear Mr. Bentley:

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# 429848.

The University of Houston (the "university") received a request for the winning responses to eight specified requests for qualifications ("RFQ"). Although you take no position on the public availability of the submitted information, you state the release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of Linbeck, Gensler, WHR Architects, Inc., and J.T. Vaughn Construction, LLC. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you have notified the third parties of the request and of their right to submit arguments to this office as to why the requested information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (determining that statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception to disclosure in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

We note an interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) of the Government Code to submit its reasons, if any, as to why requested information relating to it should be withheld from disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received arguments from any of the third parties. We, thus, have no basis for concluding any portion of the submitted information constitutes the third parties' proprietary information.

*See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the university may not withhold any of the submitted information based on the proprietary interests of any of the third parties. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the submitted information must be released.

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 [http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index\\_orl.php](http://www.oag.state.tx.us/open/index_orl.php), or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act must be directed to the Cost Rules Administrator of the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Burnett  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JB/dls

Ref: ID# 429848

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor  
(w/o enclosures)

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