ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

December 7, 2011

Ms. Linda Champion
Assistant City Attorney
City of Victoria
P.O. Box 1758
Victoria, Texas 77902-1758

OR2011-18021

Dear Ms. Champion:

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# 443638.

The Victoria Municipal Court (the "court") received a request for information pertaining to traffic cases. You claim the requested information is not subject to the Act. In the alternative, you claim the requested information is excepted from disclosure under sections 552.101 and 552.130 of the Government Code. We have considered the exceptions you claim and reviewed the information you submitted.

We note the Act is applicable to information "collected, assembled, or maintained under a law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by a governmental body." Gov't Code § 552.002(a)(1). However, the Act's definition of "governmental body" "does not include the judiciary." *Id.* § 552.003(1)(B). Information "collected, assembled, or maintained by or for the judiciary" is not subject to the Act but instead is "governed by rules adopted by the Supreme Court of Texas or by other applicable laws and rules." *Id.* § 552.0035(a); *cf.* Open Records Decision No. 131 (1976) (applying statutory predecessor to judiciary exclusion under Gov't Code § 552.003(1)(B) prior to enactment of Gov't Code § 552.0035). The instant request is for information maintained by the court. Therefore, we conclude the requested information is not subject to the Act and need not be released in

response to this request for information.[1] As we are able to make this determination, we do not address your exceptions to disclosure.

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, 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,

Tamara H. Holland
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

THH/ag

Ref: ID# 443638

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

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[1]We note records of the judiciary also may be public under other sources of law. *See* Gov't Code § 29.007(d)(4) (complaints filed with municipal court clerk); *id.* § 29.007(f) (municipal court clerks shall perform duties prescribed by law for county court clerk); Local Gov't Code § 191.006 (records belonging to office of county clerk shall be open to public unless access restricted by law or court order); *see also Star-Telegram, Inc. v. Walker*, 834 S.W.2d 54, 57 (Tex. 1992) (documents filed with courts are generally considered public and must be released); Attorney General Opinions DM-166 (1992) at 2-3 (public has general right to inspect and copy judicial records), H-826 (1976); Open Records Decision No. 25 (1974).