



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

February 3, 2016

Mr. Jamie Tijerina
Deputy City Attorney
City of Mission
1201 East 8th Street
Mission, Texas 78572

OR2016-02574

Dear Ms. Tijerina:

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# 598527.

The City of Mission (the "city") received a request for site plans and floor plans for a specified location. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of DCI Engineers ("DCI"), Gallegos Project Management ("Gallegos"), and FJW. Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified DCI, Gallegos, and FJW of the request for information and of their right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted representative sample of information.¹

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) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code

¹We 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 those records contain substantially different types of information than that submitted to this office.

§ 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from DCI, Gallegos, or FJW explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude DCI, Gallegos, or FJW has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted 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 city may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest DCI, Gallegos, or FJW may have in the information.

We note some of the materials at issue may be protected by copyright. A custodian of public records must comply with the copyright law and is not required to furnish copies of records that are copyrighted. Open Records Decision No. 180 at 3 (1977). A governmental body must allow inspection of copyrighted materials unless an exception applies to the information. *Id.*; *see* Open Records Decision No. 109 (1975). If a member of the public wishes to make copies of copyrighted materials, the person must do so unassisted by the governmental body. In making copies, the member of the public assumes the duty of compliance with the copyright law and the risk of a copyright infringement suit. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the city must release the submitted information; however, any information that is subject to copyright may be released only in accordance with copyright law.

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.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, 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 may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Claire V. Morris Sloan
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CVMS/som

Ref: ID# 598527

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

DCI Engineers
106 East 6th Street, Suite 200
Austin, Texas 78701
(w/o enclosures)

Gallegos Project Management
1301 South Capital of Texas Highway,
Suite A-302
Austin, Texas 78746
(w/o enclosures)

FJW
1301 South Capital of Texas Hwy,
Suite A-302
Austin, Texas 78746
(w/o enclosures)