



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

March 7, 2005

Ms. R. Yvette Clark
General Counsel
Stephen F. Austin State University
P.O. Box 13065
Nacogdoches, Texas 75962-3065

OR2005-01923

Dear Ms. Clark:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 219540.

Stephen F. Austin State University (the "university") received a request for all responses submitted in response to RFP # DES-BLD-ST-HOUSING. Although you take no position with respect to the requested information, you claim that the requested information may contain proprietary information subject to exception under the Public Information Act (the "Act"). Pursuant to section 552.305(d) of the Government Code, the university notified the interested third parties, Camden Builders, Inc. ("Camden") and McCarthy Building Companies, Inc. ("McCarthy"), of the university's receipt of the request and of their right to submit arguments to us as to why any portion of the submitted 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 under the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the information you have submitted.

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 § 552.305(d)(2)(B). Because neither Camden nor McCarthy submitted arguments to this office in response to the section 552.305 notice, we have no basis to conclude that their information is excepted from disclosure. *See* Open Records Decision Nos. 639 at 4 (1996)

(to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual or evidentiary material, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that it actually faces competition and that substantial competitive injury would likely result from disclosure), 552 at 5 (1990). The responsive information must therefore be released to the requestor.

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).

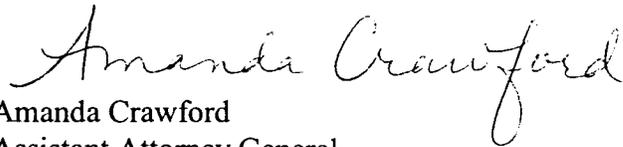
If this ruling requires or permits the governmental body to withhold all or some of the requested information, the requestor can appeal that decision by suing the governmental body. *Id.* § 552.321(a); *Tex. Dep't of Pub. Safety v. Gilbreath*, 842 S.W.2d 408, 411 (Tex. App.—Austin 1992, no writ).

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 Texas Building and Procurement Commission 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. We note that a third party may challenge this

ruling by filing suit seeking to withhold information from a requestor. Gov't Code § 552.325. 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,



Amanda Crawford
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

AEC/sdk

Ref: ID# 219540

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Mr. Rafael Figueroa
Collegiate Development
7701 Las Colinas Ridge, Suite 100
Irving, Texas 75063
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Bobby Rivers
Camden Builders, Inc.
Three Greenway Plaza, Suite 1300
Houston, Texas 77046
(w/o enclosures)

Mr. Michael J. McWay
McCarthy Building Companies, Inc.
14131 Midway Road, Suite 630
Addison, Texas 75001
(w/o enclosures)