



**KEN PAXTON**  
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

March 9, 2016

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

OR2016-05462

Dear Mr. 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# 602511 (File Nos. 1129, 1130).

The City of Mission (the "city") received a request for construction plans pertaining to a specified address. The city does not take a position as to whether the submitted information is excepted from disclosure under the Act. However, the city states, and provides documentation showing, it notified S.C. Drafting and Designs ("SCDD") of the city's receipt of the request for information and of SCDD's 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 at 3 (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.<sup>1</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup>We 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.

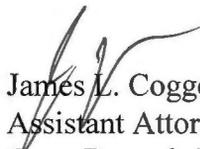
requested information relating to it should be withheld from disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, SCDD has not submitted to this office any reasons explaining why the requested information should not be released. Thus, we have no basis for concluding the submitted information constitutes proprietary information of that third party, and the city may not withhold any portion of it on that basis. *See* 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.

The city asserts 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. Thus, the city must release the submitted information, but may only release any copyrighted information 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](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,



James L. Coggeshall  
Assistant Attorney General  
Open Records Division

JLC/bhf

Ref: ID# 602511

Enc. Submitted documents

c: 2 Requestors  
(w/o enclosures)

S.C. Drafting and Designs  
5103 South McColl  
Edinburg, Texas 78539  
(w/o enclosures)