



KEN PAXTON
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS

July 13, 2016

Mr. Vic Ramirez
Associate General Counsel
Lower Colorado River Authority
P.O. Box 220
Austin, Texas 78767-0220

OR2016-15860

Dear Mr. Ramirez:

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# 618131.

The Lower Colorado River Authority (the "authority") received a request for information pertaining to a specified request for proposals. You state you have released some information to the requestor. Although you take no position with respect to the submitted information, you state release of this information may implicate the proprietary interests of GP Strategies Corporation and NAES Corporation. Accordingly, you state you notified the third parties of the request for information and of their rights to submit arguments to this office as to why the information at issue 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 information.

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 information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from any notified third party explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude the notified third parties have 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 authority may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest a notified third party may have in the information.

We note portions of the submitted information 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 submitted information must be released; however, any information 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cole Hutchison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "C" at the beginning.

Cole Hutchison
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

CH/bhf

Ref: ID# 618131

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Third Parties
(w/o enclosures)