

Texas Appeals Court Affirms Haynes Boone Win for The Dallas Morning News in Public Records Case

October 1, 2025 Thomas Williams, Reid Pillifant

Haynes Boone represented *The Dallas Morning News* in a significant public transparency victory after the Texas Court of Appeals for the Fifteenth District ordered the City of Dallas to release documents related to a federal housing discrimination investigation.

The court unanimously agreed with Haynes Boone that the records from a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) investigation into alleged housing discrimination by the City are not exempt from disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act.

The case stems from a HUD investigation into a resident's claims that the City disproportionately located low-income housing developments in minority neighborhoods. The City attempted to shield the records relating to potential litigation by the resident, but the court concluded the City had waived the opportunity to assert such an exemption.

Justice April Farris, writing for the majority, noted that the City did not identify potential litigation with the resident as a basis for withholding when it submitted its ruling request to the Texas attorney general. and stated that "the City failed to give the attorney general enough factual information" to determine whether the litigation exception applied.

"This ruling reinforces the principle that a governmental body seeking an attorney general ruling to allow it to withhold information must disclose all of the bases for its position so that the attorney general can make an informed and proper determination," said Fort Worth Partner [Thomas Williams](#). "Because very few Public Information Act cases go to litigation, for most requests, the attorney general ruling is the final word, and it is critical to the process that governmental bodies seeking to withhold public information have, and disclose to the attorney general, a specific basis for doing so, not simply relying on general allegations of an exception."

Austin Associate [Reid Pillifant](#) joined Williams in representing *The Dallas Morning News*.

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