

CJ Griffin Secured Access to the City of Newark's Bid to Land Amazon's Second U.S. Headquarters

News

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On April 25, 2018, Pashman Stein Walder Hayden partner CJ Griffin secured access to the City of Newark's bid to land Amazon's second U.S. headquarters (the HQ2 proposal). The release came in response to an Open Public Records Act (OPRA) lawsuit that Griffin filed in February 2018 on behalf of long-term client Steven Wronko. For more information about the evolution of this case, please see our new story, "Lawsuit Seeks Newark's Amazon HQ2 Proposal."

Previously, Newark denied numerous OPRA requests for the HQ2 proposal, claiming the proposal was confidential under a provision of OPRA that exempts material which "would give an advantage to competitors or bidders." Because OPRA requires public records to be redacted so that non-exempt information is released, Wronko argued that Newark could protect its interests by making minor redactions only to the confidential information and letting the public see the rest of the proposal.

Ultimately, Newark released its 200-page proposal, titled "Yes, Newark," and redacted only 6 pages which detail the local tax incentives Newark plans to offer Amazon. The remainder of the proposal showcases the city's diversity, technology infrastructure and transportation systems, along with more than 50 pages of letters from institutions and entities recommending the city. The HQ2 proposal, with the redacted pages, can be viewed on the firm's OPRA Blog.

Griffin hails the disclosure as "a significant transparency victory" but also says that she is still negotiating to fully resolve the lawsuit. In the meantime, disclosure of the proposal has provided the public with details that were previously not widely known, such as the proposed locations in Newark that could serve as the Amazon campus.

The case has garnered much media attention, including front page coverage by the Star Ledger.

Links to media coverage:

- April 27, 2018, Associated Press, "**Newark publicizes its pitch to Amazon: 'Yes, Newark.'**" To read the article please click [here](#).
- April 26, 2018, Newark Star Ledger, "**What to know about the 6 sites proposed for Newark Amazon HQ.**" To read article please click [here](#).
- April 26, 2018, ROINJ.com, "**Read the details of Newark's Amazon HQ2 proposal.**" To read article please click [here](#).
- April 26, 2018, Newark Patch.com, "**Key Details Of Newark's Bid For Amazon HQ Revealed.**" To read article please click [here](#).
- April 26, 2018, CNet, "**Newark releases Amazon HQ2 proposal highlighting the city's diversity, tech infrastructure.**" To read article please click [here](#).
- April 26, 2018, New Jersey Law Journal, "**Plaintiff Who Made Public Newark's Amazon 'HQ2' Proposal Seeks Fee Award.**" To read article please click [here](#).
- April 25, 2018, NJ.com, "**Newark finally released its Amazon HQ2 proposal. Read all the juicy details, including proposed locations.**" To read article please click [here](#).
- April 26, 2018, Law 360, "**Newark Discloses Amazon HQ Bid Amid Public Records Suit.**" To read article please click [here](#).