



August 7, 2018

Monroe County Commissioners  
100 West Kirkwood Avenue  
The Courthouse, Room 322  
Bloomington, Indiana 47404

RE: Nullification of the Convention Center MOU

Dear Commissioners Barge, Stoffers, and Thomas,

We were surprised and disappointed to receive your letter notifying us that you regard the memorandum of understanding signed just two weeks ago to be null and void. We reject your allegation that we have denied the fundamental premise of our MOU, and continue to believe a collaborative approach is optimal.

In the letter, the County has inaccurately characterized the process that has transpired in the following ways:

- “Mr. Patel,” as you identify the chairman and CEO of Sun Companies, was not selected as the project hotel developer, as the letter asserts. Sun Companies was identified as an appropriate hotel developer for the Convention Center Project, but that relationship was not contractual.
- In connection with that identification of Sun Companies, City representatives and others have long identified concerns with the County-led process used to solicit applications and identify a single proposed developer.
- The City has consistently and over a period of many months shared with the County that a wider process should be pursued to assure the public that we have identified the best hotel partner. Similar concerns motivated the splitting of the project into two separate projects to build a hotel and a convention center. While some members of County government have supported such a process, others have indicated their opposition to a more open process.
- As mayor, I contacted Mr. Patel and informed him that in the time since the County Commissioners’ RFQ closed in May 2017, passage of the Food and Beverage Tax in December has expanded interest in the convention center project, and other hoteliers have sought the opportunity to be considered as the hotel developer, and that the City considers that having an open door to potential partners is appropriate.

- Contrary to the letter's assertion, no City representative privately invited new proposals for the development of the hotel, certainly not from a few "hand-selected" vendors.

Again, I would reaffirm our continued commitment to participating in a productive and collaborative relationship on the Steering Committee in the interest of developing a civic/convention center that will serve the needs of our wider community. That is what the community expects from us, and I earnestly hope you will reconsider your declared withdrawal from the MOU.

Sincerely,

John Hamilton  
Mayor, City of Bloomington