

October 10, 2014

Lakefront Development Advisory Commission  
William H. Lynch, Chairman  
312 East Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 210  
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Re: The Couture Project

Chairman Lynch:

Barrett Visionary Development would like to submit an application for LDAC review of the proposed Couture project on the site of the current Downtown Transit Center.

Below, and attached, please find the completed application. We look forward to presenting to the Commission and answering any questions the Commission may have.

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## REQUEST FOR REVIEW

### **CONTACT PERSON / SPOKESPERSON:**

Rick Barrett, Founder, Barrett Visionary Development;  
260 E Highland Suite 401, Milwaukee WI 53202; 414.220.4726; rbarrett@barrettdev.com

### **PROPOSED SITE:**

DESCRIBE THE PARTICULAR LOCATION. ATTACH A MAP OR DIAGRAM SHOWING THE SITE BOUNDARIES. INDICATE THE OWNER OR OWNERS OF THE PROPOSED SITE. INDICATE THE ACREAGE OR SQUARE FEET OF THE PROPOSED SITE. IF SHORELINE IS TO BE USED, INDICATE HOW MUCH. DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SITE IS USED NOW.

[See Exhibit A attached for a survey of the Downtown Transit Center site.]

According to Milwaukee County, the site consists of a 2.207 acre parcel improved with the Milwaukee County Transit Downtown Complex located at 909. E. Michigan Street in Milwaukee. The facility comprises a two-story bus waiting station and bus marshaling structure with a gross building area of 111,460 square feet. The parcel fronts along E. Michigan Street on its north side, N. Lincoln Memorial Drive on its east side and E. Clybourn Street on its south side.

The site is owned by Milwaukee County.

## **GENERAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE OVERALL PURPOSE AND NATURE OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

The proposed development is the Couture – a public-private partnership between Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee and Barrett Visionary Development to enhance public access to the lake, activate public space, and bring modern public transportation infrastructure into the area.

The site will include more than 1.9 acres of outdoor, 24-hour public space, generate \$68,000,000 of tax revenue to cover public infrastructure or other needs, create thousands of construction jobs, and yield over \$23,000,000 in contracts to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.

## **BUILDINGS OR OTHER STRUCTURES:**

IDENTIFY ALL BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES OR OTHER PHYSICAL ADDITIONS TO THE SITE THAT WILL BE PART OF THE PROJECT. DESCRIBE NEW CONSTRUCTION OR INSTALLATION AND ANY MODIFICATION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES. FOR EACH BUILDING, STRUCTURE OR OTHER PHYSICAL ADDITION TO THE SITE, DESCRIBE ITS PROPOSED USE OR USES. DESCRIBE THE DESIGN OF EACH STRUCTURE OR PHYSICAL ADDITION TO THE SITE. SUPPLY PHOTOGRAPHS OR DRAWINGS OF EACH. A SCALE MODEL OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO THE COMMISSION'S UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT YOU PROPOSE.

[See Exhibit B. Buildings & Other Structures]

The existing structure would be demolished to prepare the site for the proposed development. The proposed building consists of a 44-story mixed-use skyscraper that will include:

- **44 STORIES / 700,000 SQUARE FEET**
- Public Spaces, including:
  1. **PEDESTRIAN VISITOR PLAZA** (9,150 sf) providing a welcoming public space as visitors to the area move through to their destination.
  2. **PUBLIC TRANSIT CURB CUTS** to integrate existing County bus transit
  3. **ROOFTOP PARK** (29,385 sf) providing public access to green space overlooking the lake. In addition, the site will provide a natural surface and aesthetic improvement for other downtown office employees and residents with views that overlook the park.
  4. **VISITOR WALKWAYS** (12,940 sf) will serve millions of public visitors annually directing them to area retail, downtown businesses, public transit, nearby attractions and public lakefront pathways.
  5. **PUBLIC AREA CORE** (7,394 sf) contains public handicap access points to elevator public parking and public and private transit.
  6. **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CONCOURSE** (20,855 sf) provides an inspiring open area connecting the public to county bus transit, proposed city streetcar transit, public walkways, parking bike share and street side pickup.
  7. **PUBLIC ACCESS STAIRS AND WALKWAYS** (1,715 sf) will provide the necessary capacity for moving large crowds through this dynamic hub.
- **302 MARKET RATE APARTMENTS**
- **DESTINATION RESTAURANT AND RETAIL SPACE** (54,893 square feet)
- **570 PARKING SPACES** (including 147 dedicated for public use)

**LANDSCAPING:**

DESCRIBE THE LANDSCAPING YOUR PROJECT WILL INCLUDE.

There are two distinct landscape areas included in the Couture project. At the ground level, a plaza wraps the corner to allow for improved pedestrian flow around this important intersection. An urban terrace is created between the building and the street, where the building becomes a backdrop to the activity in this public plaza. The terrace will include amenities such as a possible water feature, a bike share station, and places for informal gatherings.

The rooftop of the podium includes a sizable public park with garden pathways, areas meant for repose and reflection, and spectacular views to the city and lake. The rooftop includes a publicly accessible restaurant and adjacent outdoor terrace space.

[See Exhibit C. Green roof landscaping]

**PARKING:**

HOW MANY PARKING SPACES WILL BE REQUIRED WHEN YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT IS IN PEAK USE? DESCRIBE WHERE YOU PROPOSE THAT THE REQUIRED PARKING WILL BE. HOW WILL THE PARKING YOUR PROJECT WILL REQUIRE AFFECT AVAILABILITY OF PARKING FOR OTHERS? WILL YOUR PARKING NEEDS INCREASE IN THE FUTURE? IF SO, WHERE DO YOU PROPOSE THE ADDITIONAL PARKING WILL BE LOCATED?

The building will include 570 new parking spaces in the lower levels to meet the demands of the building uses as well as to provide additional public parking for the lakefront.

**TRAFFIC AND PEDESTRIAN FLOW:**

DESCRIBE THE TRAFFIC PATTERNS THAT WILL RESULT FROM YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT. DESCRIBE HOW PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC WILL FLOW.

[See Exhibit D. Traffic & Pedestrian Flow]

The site will provide new and enhanced connections for pedestrian traffic to gain access to the lakefront and the public parks and cultural amenities east of Lincoln Memorial Drive. In addition to the public concourses and walkways described above, the site is designed to accommodate connections to pedestrian bridges crossing over Lincoln Memorial from the public spaces on the site.

The site is being designed in collaboration with the County, City and State to meet the traffic pattern needs of the new Lakefront Gateway Project. The eastern border of the property along Lincoln Memorial Drive is designed to accommodate an extension of the Oak Leaf Trail between the building and the street. The space between the building and the street will be a generous width to accommodate the trail extension.

**PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR USE OF SITE:**

IF SITE IS TO BE LEASED, INDICATE LEASE TERM AND RENT. IF PURCHASED, INDICATE PURCHASE PRICE. LIST ANY SPECIAL TERMS OR CONDITIONS OF THE SALE OR LEASE.

The site would be purchased for \$500,000, with the developer taking responsibility for the demolition and preparation of the site (approximately \$2 - 3 million).

DESCRIBE THE IMPACT YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT WILL HAVE ON EACH OF THE FOLLOWING: PROMOTION OF CLEAN WATER. REDUCTION OF AIR POLLUTION. NOISE LEVELS. TRAFFIC CONGESTION. LITTER REDUCTION.

The Couture is designed as a multi-modal transportation hub to encourage greater use of mass transit - including county buses, city streetcar, bicycle ride-share and pedestrian walkways. We believe this will reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.

DESCRIBE THE AREA SURROUNDING THE PROPOSED SITE. IDENTIFY HOW EACH PART OF THE SURROUNDING AREA IS CURRENTLY USED. IDENTIFY ALL IMPACTS YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT WILL HAVE ON USE OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.

The site is designed to provide connections between the lakefront and downtown and between neighboring properties. It has been designed to facilitate easy pedestrian traffic across Lincoln Memorial, as well as across to O'Donnell Park. The orientation of the building has been adjusted to meet the needs of the adjacent 833 office tower.

DESCRIBE HOW YOUR PROJECT WILL CHANGE SITE LINES AND VISTAS OF THE LAKE.

The Couture structure will provide views for its residents and visitors from walkways, rooftop park and residential tower, while enhancing the Downtown Milwaukee skyline with a breathtaking architectural design.

**ACCESS TO THE LAKE:**

DESCRIBE HOW YOUR PROJECT WILL AFFECT ACCESS TO THE LAKEFRONT AREA GENERALLY AND PARTICULARLY TO THE WATER'S EDGE.

The project is situated to the west of Lincoln Memorial Drive. It is being designed to enhance public access to the lakefront through the incorporation of pedestrian walkways and bridges over Lincoln Memorial Drive. It will serve as a mass transit hub providing enhanced connections to the lakefront from downtown, as well as to the broader metropolitan region.

**FOOD SERVICE:**

DO YOU PROPOSE TO PROVIDE FOOD SERVICE. IF YOU DO, DESCRIBE THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE SERVICE TO BE PROVIDED. INCLUDE PROPOSED HOURS, ANY LIMITS ON WHO WILL BE SERVED, PROJECTED MEAL OR SAMPLE ITEM PRICE RANGES.

We are in the process of securing retail tenants, and cannot respond to this question at this time.

**GREAT LAKES HISTORY:**

HOW DOES YOUR PROPOSAL CONVEY OUR GREAT LAKES HISTORY? HOW WILL IT PRESERVE OUR LAKE MICHIGAN HERITAGE? HOW WILL IT LEAVE A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE?

The Couture project was designed according to the Long Range Lakefront Committee's executive summary, approved and signed-off on by the Lakefront Development Advisory Commission, in which the recommended development of the Downtown Transit Center site use is described as a "multi-story, high-value, use more appropriate to its location at the lakefront."

**OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL ROLE OF PARKLAND:**

HOW WILL YOUR PROJECT IMPACT THE TRADITIONAL OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL ROLE OF LAKEFRONT PARKLAND?

The project will significantly enhance the traditional open space and recreational role of lakefront parkland. First, the site includes more total public space than exists on the present site, including a new public park. Second, the site is designed to enhance multi-modal connections to the lakefront, providing new ways for the public to access the open space and recreational areas east of Lincoln Memorial Drive.

**NECESSITY FOR LAKEFRONT SITE:**

IS THE USE YOU PROPOSE NOW LOCATED AWAY FROM THE LAKEFRONT? CAN THE USE YOU PROPOSE BE LOCATED AWAY FROM THE LAKEFRONT? DESCRIBE THE EFFORTS YOU HAVE UNDERTAKEN TO LOCATE A SITE FOR YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT AWAY FROM THE LAKEFRONT. IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR PROJECT CAN ONLY BE LOCATED AT THE PROPOSED LAKEFRONT SITE, PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY.

It is essential that the proposed project be located at this site because it is being designed, from the ground up, as a way to enhance connections to the lakefront. The site will provide new public spaces - that exceed those currently on the site - and will serve as a multi-modal transit hub to enhance public access and transportation connections to the lakefront. The project is a critical part of the broader Lakefront Gateway effort.

**IMPACT ON SPACE FOR TEMPORARY USES:**

HOW LONG WILL THE USE YOU PROPOSE BE IN PLACE?

Not applicable

WHAT IMPACT WILL YOUR PROJECT HAVE ON THE AVAILABILITY OF SPACE FOR TEMPORARY USES?

Not applicable

**RESTORATION PLAN WHEN PROPOSED USE OF SITE ENDS:**

WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED IF THE USE YOU PROPOSE FOR THE SITE IS NO LONGER APPROPRIATE? HOW WILL THE SITE BE RESTORED?

The Couture as a structure is designed with a 200+ year expectancy.

**EXPANSION:**

DESCRIBE ALL FUTURE PHASES FOR YOUR PROJECT AND ALL ANTICIPATED FUTURE EXPANSION. IDENTIFY ALL BUILDINGS, STRUCTURES OR OTHER PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS ANTICIPATED OR THAT ARE DESIRABLE. DESCRIBE ALL ANTICIPATED FUTURE PARKING, ROADWAY AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS. DESCRIBE THE IMPACT OF YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT ON THE EXPANSION POSSIBILITIES AND NEEDS OF NEARBY FACILITIES NOW AND IN THE FUTURE.

Not applicable

**BUSINESS PLAN VIABILITY:**

PROVIDE THE BUSINESS PLAN FOR YOUR PROPOSED PROJECT. INCLUDE ALL PROJECTED REVENUES AND IDENTIFY THE PROPOSED SOURCE OR SOURCES FOR EACH. LIST YOUR ANTICIPATED EXPENSES, BOTH FOR BEGINNING OF YOUR PROJECT AND FOR CONTINUING UPKEEP AND MAINTENANCE. DEMONSTRATE THE LONG-TERM VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF YOUR PROPOSED USE OF LAKEFRONT LAND. INDICATE WHETHER YOU HAVE RECEIVED OR WILL BE SEEKING SUPPORT FROM ANY GOVERNMENTAL SOURCE. INCLUDE ANY EXPECTATION THAT YOUR PROJECT WILL RECEIVE THE BENEFIT OF IN KIND CONTRIBUTIONS OR REDUCED RATES FOR GOODS OR SERVICES.

The total project cost is currently estimated at \$122 million. For a project overview, , please see the details listed above in the initial project description. Financial analysis of this project proposal is currently under review by the City and County.

**YOUR EXPERIENCE AND RESOURCES:**

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE EXPERIENCE YOU HAVE HAD WITH DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS SIMILAR TO THE PROJECT YOU ARE PROPOSING?

The innovative work of Barrett Visionary Development has been concentrated in the Milwaukee area, with a current real-estate development pipeline estimated at over \$500 million, with a focus on mixed-use residential that contributes to the density of a city. The progression of work was visible in 2012 with the opening of the The Moderne, a downtown, 30 story, mixed-use luxury apartment and condominium building resting on the west side of the Milwaukee river. As of this summer, The Moderne was fully leased, ahead of schedule.

DESCRIBE THE QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE KEY PEOPLE INVOLVED WITH IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROPOSAL.

Rinka Chung Architecture Inc is an award-winning full service architecture firm existing to serve progressive and visionary clients. The firm vision statement is "to inspire through thoughtful design." RCA maintains a broad based architectural practice, intentionally avoiding project categorizations or narrow areas of expertise. RCA specializes in complex, collaborative projects that require a unique approach, thoughtful design, and creative problem solving. This approach allows them to devise tailored design solutions to each project rather than applying off the shelf techniques. As a Milwaukee-based, full service architecture and interior design firm, RCA has the experience and capabilities for projects of any scale and complexity.

Matt Rinka, AIA, NCARB, is the Principal in Charge of the project and the lead design Architect. Chad Griswold, AIA, is the Senior Project Manager. Michelle Olsen, ASID, is the Senior Interior Designer. This leadership team is supported by some of the most passionate and experienced design professionals in the city. This team has collaborated on many successful projects, including The Moderne high-rise residential tower in downtown Milwaukee.

DESCRIBE THE FUNDS AND RESOURCES YOU HAVE IN HAND TO SUPPORT THE PROJECT AND THEIR SOURCE. DO YOU HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO GO FORWARD WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT? EXPLAIN.

Financial analysis of this project proposal is currently under review by the City and County.

**FUTURE PUBLIC INVESTMENT:**

DO YOU ASSUME THAT ANY GOVERNMENTAL BODY WILL MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCOMMODATE YOUR PROJECT? IDENTIFY THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY YOU ANTICIPATE WILL MAKE THE CHANGES AND THEIR COST. WILL PUBLIC INVESTMENT BE REQUIRED IN THE FUTURE?

The project represents a public-private partnership between Milwaukee County, the City of Milwaukee and Barrett Visionary Development. The City of Milwaukee is proposing to support the development of public infrastructure on the site through Tax Incremental Financing. That investment is estimated at \$17.5 million.

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Thank you for your time. Please let us know if you need any other documentation.

Sincerely,



Richard Barrett



**EXHIBIT B**  
BUILDINGS & OTHER STRUCTURES



View of the Couture looking north along N Lincoln Memorial Drive



View of the Couture at the corner of N Lincoln Memorial Drive and E Michigan Street

**EXHIBIT B**  
**BUILDINGS & OTHER STRUCTURES**



View of the Couture along E Michigan Street at the street car concourse



View of the Couture inside the street car concourse

**EXHIBIT B**  
**BUILDINGS & OTHER STRUCTURES**



View of the Couture looking east along E Michigan Street



View of the Couture on E Michigan Street at the street car concourse

**EXHIBIT C**  
**LANDSCAPING**



Green roof landscaping



Public plaza at the corner of N Lincoln Memorial Drive and E Michigan Street

