

Dear residents of Rock Island:

My name is Bill Healy and my family and I own Bridges Catering. This letter is to inform you that Bridges Catering is the business that was working with the City of Rock Island about the purchase of the Hauberg Mansion.

Bridges Catering is the Quad Cities largest catering company and currently we're based out of Princeton, Iowa. We are the exclusive caterer at three of Rock Island's premier banquet facilities: The Abbey Station, Quad City Botanical Center, and Skellington Manor. We also cater to over 40 different venues in the Quad Cities and surrounding areas. For the last several years we have been actively seeking to move our operation from Princeton to the Quad Cities to better serve our customers. We have looked at numerous properties, primarily in Rock Island, because our family is from here and this is where we live.

Our business model is unique and takes a special location. We need a site that is attractive, has a functioning kitchen (which we would most likely invest significant money in) as well as office space and a facility that would seat no greater than 100 people so as to not compete with any of the great venues that we currently service.

It was not our intent to make our proposal public until we felt we could present a plan that benefitted the City, the property and our business so we requested that our discussions with City staff and Council be kept confidential. Unfortunately someone chose to leak the information so we now feel that with all the speculation, misinformation, and genuine negativity, we needed to come forward. We know there are some uncertainties surrounding our proposal and that our plans may never come to fruition. We also understand that for the City to move an idea forward with the property it would have to be bid out and there's no guarantee we would be the project chosen. We certainly appreciate that we need the support of the Rock Island city council, the mayor, the park board and most importantly the community at large. We also recognize that the loud voices of a few should not frighten us from dreaming big. We feel that if the citizens of Rock Island hear our vision, they will see it as a great benefit to the property, city, community, our customers, our employees and our business.

Our proposed plan for the Hauberg property is a win-win, public/private partnership. First, we would be bringing our family business to our hometown. We would bring 12 full time and 105 part time employees to Rock Island. Second, moving our entire operation brings significant sales tax revenue to the city and by privatizing the property we will pay property tax on a location that hasn't been on the tax rolls for almost 70 years. Third, the expensive renovations and updates to the property (estimated to be close to two million dollars over several years) and the continued upkeep will not be at the citizens of Rock Islands' expense. Those expenses will be made by us because our business plans on hosting events and having it available for public use and our goal is to recapture and maintain the allure and charm that the property once had. In fact, we pledged to the City that we would take great care of the property, including making historically accurate refurbishments in order to ensure that community members would want to visit it and support the mansion and its grounds.

We agree that the Hauberg Mansion is a Rock Island treasure but it is vastly underutilized and costly for the City to maintain. We see a property that with our unique business model would be, in essence, used

in the EXACT way it was meant to be used. In our plan we would actually give the people of the city MORE access as we would have staff at the property most every day. Having a full time presence at the mansion allows us the opportunity to present the property and its grandeur to a new and greater population of people. The parks surrounding the property would not be changed in their current function. And the parking lot would remain open to the public.

Our intent, as any small business owner, is to provide a better life for our family and the community in which we reside. We work hard and are proud of the business that we have built. We promise to make Hauberg the place that the community yearns for it to become once again. We know that there will be naysayers and people who are opposed to change. To those individuals, we say: our plan brings over 100 jobs to Rock Island. It provides greater exposure for the city from increased use, takes away a \$73,000 a year projected loss on the property and solves the problem of any future building maintenance. Our project would generate a six-figure yearly sales tax revenue as well as bring in valuable property tax dollars. The mansion would be utilized for its intended use as a place for the community to gather. Our vision is to make the Hauberg Mansion and its grounds a premier destination for the city of Rock Island and its residents.