

# BuzzFeed Throws Hail Mary: Publishes New Trump Tower Moscow Docs

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

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*After last week's embarrassing debacle in which special counsel **Robert Mueller** issued a rare statement [calling bullshit](#) on BuzzFeed over their Trump Tower Moscow report that Trump ordered his attorney **Michael Cohen** to lie about the timeline, the beleaguered news outlet has taken a [second bite at the apple](#) with a new report (oddly written by a completely different journalist) refuting comments by Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani that "no plans were ever made" for the project.*

## Not so fast Rudy...

In their new report, *BuzzFeed* claims that the Trump Tower Moscow idea was "led by Trump's then-lawyer, Michael Cohen, and his associate Felix Sater" despite [writing in November](#) that **Sater both thought of and spearheaded the idea**, turning to Cohen to "get it off the ground" while overpromising that he could seal the deal through his Russian connections that never panned out.

Sater, a brash real estate promoter who pleaded guilty to racketeering in 1998 and became a [longtime asset](#) to US law enforcement and intelligence agencies, had worked with the Trump Organization on deals in the past and said he came up with the idea. Cohen, Sater recalled, said, "Great idea." -[BuzzFeed](#)

Today's "gotcha," however is that the project had progressed much further than Giuliani claimed on Monday when he told the *New Yorker* "no plans were ever made. There were no drafts. Nothing in the file."

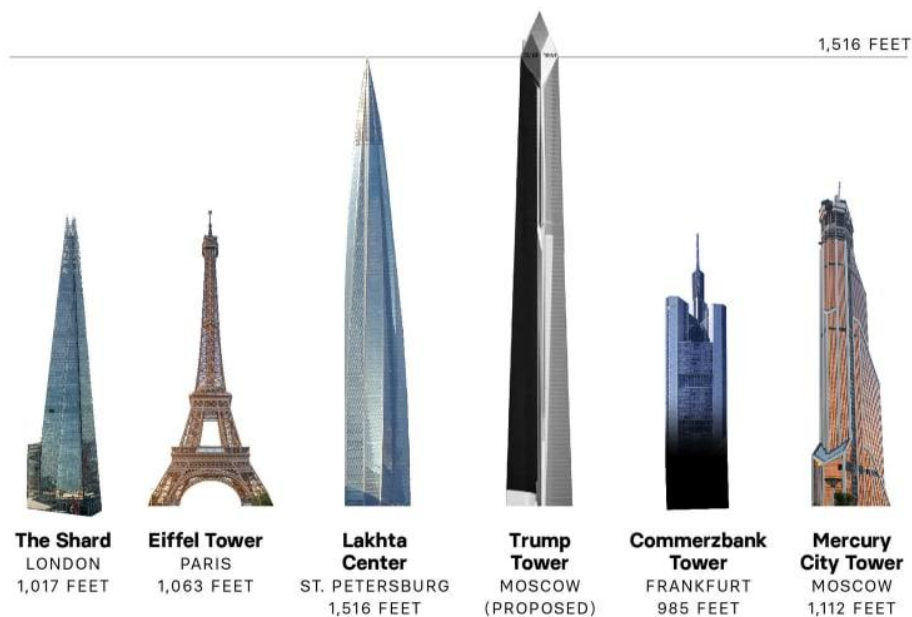


**Not true**, writes *BuzzFeed's* Azeen Ghorayshi.

The president and his representatives have dismissed the project as little more than a notion — a rough plan led by Trump's then-lawyer, Michael Cohen, and his associate Felix Sater, of which Trump and his family said they were only loosely aware as the election campaign gathered pace.

On Monday, his lawyer, [Rudy Giuliani](#), said "the proposal was in the earliest stage," and he went on to tell the [New Yorker](#) that "no plans were ever made. There were no drafts. Nothing in the file."

However, hundreds of pages of business documents, emails, text messages, and architectural plans, obtained by BuzzFeed News over a year of reporting, tell a very different story. Trump Tower Moscow was a richly imagined vision of upscale splendor on the banks of the Moscow River. -[BuzzFeed](#)



Trump Tower Moscow hasn't exactly been a secret, admits *BuzzFeed*, noting that Donald Trump tweeted about it following the 2013 Miss Universe pageant, and writing in his book *The Art of the Deal* that he had been trying to expand his business empire into Russia for over 30 years.

[@AgalarovAras](#) I had a great weekend with you and your family. You have done a FANTASTIC job. TRUMP TOWER-MOSCOW is next. EMIN was WOW!

— Donald J. Trump (@realDonaldTrump) [November 11, 2013](#)

Over the last week, Giuliani admitted to the *New York Times* that the Trump Tower Moscow discussions were “going on from the day I announced to the day I won,” Giuliani quoted Trump as saying. He then [walked back those comments](#), claiming in a statement: “My recent statements about discussions during the 2016 campaign between Michael Cohen and then-candidate Donald Trump about a potential Trump Moscow ‘project’ were hypothetical and not based on conversations I had with the President.”

In other words, Giuliani is a walking gaffe machine - which we already knew.

That said, the Trump Tower Moscow project appears to have been much more developed than anyone in the Trump camp has acknowledged.

According to a finalized letter of intent signed by Donald Trump on Oct. 28, 2015, the tower would have “approximately 250 first class, luxury residential condominiums.”

It would be located in Moscow City, a former industrial complex outside of the city center that has since been converted into an ambitious commercial district clustered with several of the tallest skyscrapers in Europe.

Its hotel portion would feature “approximately 15 floors” and contain “not

fewer than 150 hotel rooms,” the letter of intent stated. The building would feature a luxury spa and fitness center, a commercial component “consistent with the overall luxury level of the Property,” and an office space “consistent with Class A luxury office properties,” as well as “luxury” parking. -[BuzzFeed](#)



Also in the plan was “The Spa By Ivanka Trump,” as well as a \$50 million penthouse suite that they would give to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

“My idea was to give a \$50 million penthouse to Putin and charge \$250 million more for the rest of the units,” Sater told BuzzFeed in November. “All the oligarchs would line up to live in the same building as Putin.”

[Read the development proposal here.](#)

### **Show Trump the money**

The Trump Organization stood to make \$4 million on an up-front payment for the deal; 25% of which would be paid upon execution of the licensing agreement, another quarter when they finalized a location, and the other half a week before the project’s groundbreaking – or two years after the execution of the licensing agreement, whichever came first.

From there on out, Trump’s company would also get a cut of all the condominium sales at the tower, the agreement stated. From the total selling price of each unit, his company would get 5% for sales up to \$100 million, 4% for the next bracket up to \$250 million, 3% for anything between that and \$500 million, 2% for anything up to \$1 billion, and thereafter, a solid cut of 1%. For commercial and office spaces, it would get a 3% cut of all the rent. It’d get another 3% of sales on food and beverages, spa and fitness center use, and conference fees.

The deal also stipulated how much Trump’s management company would get paid for running operations at Trump Tower Moscow over 25 years. For the first five years, it would get 3% of all revenue generated by operating the hotel per month. Over the next two decades, it’d receive a flat 4%. In addition, the

management company would also receive a monthly “incentive fee” — an additional 20% of the gross operating profit for the hotel — subject to annual negotiations. -[BuzzFeed](#)

At the end of the day, Trump Tower Moscow has never happened – and Trump himself has turned out to be the worst “Putin Puppet” ever after slapping heavy sanctions on Moscow and selling Ukraine weapons that the Obama administration wouldn’t.

“Let’s make this happen and build a Trump Moscow,” wrote Sater to Cohen in October of 2015. “And possibly fix relations between the countries by showing everyone that commerce & business are much better and more practical than politics. ... Help world peace and make a lot of money, I would say that’s a great lifetime goal for us to go after.”

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