

**TESTIMONY ON THE GEORGE LUCAS MUSEUM OF NARRATIVE ART  
CHICAGO PLAN COMMISSION  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2015  
ELISE HOUREN, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

Good afternoon. My name is Elise Houren, and I am the Director of Government Relations for the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you about the proposed Lucas Museum of Narrative Art. While some have criticized the size, shape, and location, asking if the Museum really belongs in our city, the new plan has a smaller building and significantly more free parkland for the public. We cannot miss this incredible opportunity. It is time to come together and celebrate the major economic, cultural, and artistic benefits the Museum will deliver to Chicago, at absolutely no cost to the city's taxpayers.

The Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce supports the design and construction of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art because it would be a stunning addition to our catalogue of iconic structures and a legacy for which we all could be proud. Not only will it be a world-class museum featuring a unique collection of narrative art forms, but it will also feature nearly 200,000 square feet of green space which will be free for all to enjoy.

At the same time, the city stands to generate significant new tax revenue, added spending, and jobs through visits to local restaurants, hotels, and other nearby businesses. The economic impact of the Lucas Museum would be significant, adding an estimated \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion in increased tourism spending and \$120 to \$160 million in new tax revenue in its first ten years, according to studies by the Civic Consulting Alliance and World Business Chicago.

It's hard not to feel excited and inspired by what the museum will offer given founder George Lucas's vision and track record of innovative storytelling. As a community-focused education center, it is already working in close cooperation with local agencies, business organizations like the Chicagoland Chamber, community groups, and other institutions to integrate art into people's daily lives.

I am confident this museum will live by the same values that distinguish Chicago from other great cities: a commitment to excellence in art, architecture, and creativity; community involvement; diversity; and feeding our intellectual curiosity to see the bigger picture.

The Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce continues to support the design and plan for the Lucas Museum. The city should embrace the Lucas Museum and welcome its addition to our beautiful lakefront.

Thank you.