

For Immediate Release  
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**STATEMENT: We are now seriously pursuing locations outside of Chicago**

CHICAGO - The following statement is by Mellody Hobson on behalf of the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art following Friends of the Parks announcement rejecting a compromise location for the museum:

"My husband and I have worked in earnest for two years, side-by-side with every relevant city agency, community leader, and policy maker, to give what would be the largest philanthropic gift to an American city in the 21st century. From the beginning, this process has been co-opted and hijacked by a small special interest group. When the Friends of the Parks sued the city in order to preserve a parking lot, we were offered a different and feasible solution—the replacement of an underutilized and outdated convention space that would also add more than 12 acres of new parkland. Yet, even with this additional park space, an organization that claims to 'preserve, protect, improve and promote the use of parks and open space' now opposes this as well. While they claim to be a 'strong steward of Chicago and a partner to its progress,' their actions and decision rob our state of more than \$2 billion in economic benefits, thousands of jobs and countless educational opportunities for children and adults alike.

As an African American who has spent my entire life in this city I love, it saddens me that young black and brown children will be denied the chance to benefit from what this museum will offer. As Chair of the Board of After School Matters, which serves 15,000 public high school students in Chicago and has more demand than can ever be met, I have seen firsthand what art can do to spur imagination and creativity, heal the soul and advance society—something so needed right now. This is a city of big shoulders and a metropolis that is second to none. In refusing to accept the extraordinary public benefits of the museum, the Friends of the Parks has proven itself to be no friend of Chicago. We are now seriously pursuing locations outside of Chicago. If the museum is forced to leave, it will be because of the Friends of the Parks and that is no victory for anyone."

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