

W.A. Tarrow Park Corridor

Master Plan Update

February 2003

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Introduction

The W.A. Tarrow Park Corridor (formerly Lincoln Center & Wayne Smith Park) is located on the west side of the City of College Station, approximately one half mile south of Texas A&M University. It is in the heart of a low-to-moderate income area.

The corridor area is anchored on the north by a girl's softball field and adjacent playground equipment at the intersection of Park Place and Fairview. On the south is bounded by Holleman Drive next to the Lincoln Recreation Center, a mixed-use facility. On the west side by a low-income apartment complex and newly constructed Little League Fields. And the east side is bounded by Eleanor Street.

The area is generally flat and open with a major north-south drainageway which is an unnamed tributary of Bee Creek. This provides a natural division between park and multifamily residential uses. Two other minor drainageways flow into this Bee Creek tributary, segmenting the corridor into several areas.

Lincoln Center participation has experienced tremendous growth in the last several years. In 2000, the center had 49,000 youth and adults attending programs throughout the year. 2001, the overall participation grew to 67,600 people. The number grow to just under 69,000 in 2002. This represents an increase in users by about 29% in the past 3 years. Overcrowding has become more of an on-going issue. Also, the number of programs offered have increased more people.

At the direction of the City Council, and Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, the Parks & Recreation Department began the process to update the original Lincoln Center/Wayne Smith Park master plan. This process began in the summer of 2002. City staff administered a survey and the results were compiled and used to prioritize the community needs. Several different groups were surveyed including users of the Lincoln Recreation Center, area churches, neighborhood residences, city departments, and concerned citizens.

This revised master plan for this community provides an update of land use and is intended to enhance the quality of life for those who use W.A. Tarrow Park and Lincoln Recreation Center facilities.

History

The Lincoln Center/Wayne Smith Park Master Plan was originally completed and adopted in 1990. This ambitious plan linked the two municipal properties together in a plan to provide additional park amenities to the neighborhood and community.

The plan received public input through surveys and public hearings. The Lincoln Center Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board also provided input.

The plan provided direction for staff to begin development with clear goals in mind. The function of the City property in the corridor was divided into the areas **of neighborhood use, social services, community use**, and a fourth area that **mixed neighborhood and community use**.

Acquisition of additional property was essential to the plan. This additional property provided the required linkage and space for additional park features requested by participants in the planning process. The majority of the property to be acquired was either vacant or substandard housing.

The adopted plan called for continuation of the neighborhood/community functions of the Lincoln Recreation Center, extension of Eleanor Street to Montclair, addition of neighborhood park features, addition of a youth baseball park, and installation of a social services center on the east side of Eleanor Street. The youth baseball park was included because, at one time, all youth baseball was played in the area until new facilities were developed in Southwood Athletic Park. The survey respondents asked that youth baseball return to this area so that it would be more accessible to the residents in the neighborhood.

Also included in the plan was a new West District Maintenance Shop located in the Southwest portion of the park.

Plan Implementation:

- I. Beginning in the early 1990's thirty-one (31) separate pieces of property were acquired to connect various portions of the park. The result was a single park property of 21.26 acres. Much of the purchased property was cleared of brush and debris and developed into open space.
- II. Eleanor Street was extended in 1994 from Montclair to Thompson Street. This provided better access to the park and added significant on-street parking opportunities. Sidewalk improvements were also completed.
- III. In 1994, a number of site improvements were made. These included drainage improvements, sidewalks, bridges, and area lighting.
- IV. The Wayne Smith youth baseball fields were completed in 1999. This project included three (3) fields with a 200-space parking lot and a large

- concession/restroom building. This is an excellent facility with high quality fencing, turf, and drainage.
- V. The new West District Maintenance Shop was completed in 2000. This 5,000 square foot building alleviated overcrowding and provides adequate storage space for the West District's equipment. The completion of this facility allowed the District's personnel to move from the old shop located adjacent to the Lincoln Center. The completion also allowed planning for alternate uses of the old shop site.
 - VI. Additional lighting and sidewalks were added in 2000.
 - VII. In the fall of 2002, new benches were installed as part of a city-wide effort to make College Station parks more intergenerational.
 - VIII. In 2002, a 700 square foot entry space was added to the Lincoln Center to ease overcrowding and patron movement during large events.

W.A. Tarrow Park

In 1998, the Lincoln-Wayne Smith Corridor was renamed "W.A. Tarrow Park" in honor of W.A. Tarrow, a Lincoln High School principal. When the youth baseball fields were completed in 1999, the baseball complex was named the "Wayne Smith Youth Baseball Fields", in honor of his efforts in establishing the first youth baseball fields in College Station.

One-Stop Social Service Center

At the September 14, 2000 Council meeting, staff presented background information on a One-Stop Social Service Center that had been previously proposed. The project had been proposed several years earlier, and at that time \$150,000 of CDBG funding had been allocated for future design/construction costs. Staff outlined potential project options and requested Council direction. At that meeting, Council directed staff to further study the need for such a facility. At the June 28, 2001 Council meeting, staff presented findings of studies and surveys that were prepared to explore the One-Stop issue. Based on those findings, staff recommended to Council that the previously allocated funding be reallocated to other public facility projects and that the City, instead, support ongoing Information and Referral efforts in the community. Finally, those funds were reallocated by Council at the August 9, 2001, to other public facility projects.

Goals and Objectives

The original Lincoln Center/Wayne Smith Master Plan was completed in 1990. Much of the plan has been successfully completed. Over \$2.5 million has been expended within the corridor on items identified in the 1990 plan. This updated plan identifies past accomplishments and provides planning direction for the future. Unlike the original plan, this new plan includes evaluation and planning for future additions to the Lincoln Recreation Center.

Goals and Objectives:

I. Update Plan Accomplishments

- Show existing access points.
- Document existing boundaries gained through park acquisition.
- Identify infrastructure additions.
- Identify current land use.

II. Change The Name Of The Plan

- The corridor is now known as W.A. Tarrow Park.
- Youth baseball fields are now the "Wayne Smith Youth Baseball Fields."

III. Park Planning and Development

- Provide updated park infrastructure needs.
- Plan for future use of park buildings.
- Develop recommendations for future land use.
- Develop recommendations for future land acquisitions.

IV. Lincoln Center Planning and Development

- Establish programming priorities for the Lincoln Recreation Center.
- Develop recommendations for use of existing space within the Lincoln Recreation Center.
- Identify additional space needs for the Lincoln Recreation Center.

Timetable for Lincoln Center Master Plan Review

July 12, 2002	Complete and finalize wording for the survey.
July 26, 2002	Presentation to Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Board for approval before administering the survey.
August 23, 2002	Complete surveys and start tallying numbers.
September 9, 2002	Return results of the survey to the Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Committee and conduct a public hearing.
October 14, 2002	Present and discuss staff analyses of the survey results with the Lincoln Center Advisory Committee.
November 2002	Finalize data collection and analyses. 1) What is wanted for Tarrow Park 2) What is wanted for the Lincoln Recreation Center Collection groups should included: Lincoln School Former Students Concerned Black Men Org. Area churches that use the center City Departments – PARD & others Regular users of the center Renters of the center Seniors Adults – older & younger Youth Lincoln Recreation Center Staff
December 9, 2002	Conduct a public hearing with the Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Committee and prioritize list.
January 2003	Staff development of draft plan.
February 18, 2003	Staff review with city management
February 18, 2003	Presentation and discussion of the draft plan with Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Committee and the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board during a joint meeting.
February 24, 2002	Discussion, consideration, and possible action of the plan by the Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Committee.
March 4, 2003	Discussion, consideration, and possible action of the plan by the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.
April 17, 2003	Presentation of the plan to the Planning and Zoning Commission.
May 8, 2003	Presentation of the plan to the City Council for possible adoption.

Data Collection

Many different sources were used in the collection of the data. Opinions and information were solicited from both the private and public sectors to insure thoroughness. City staff, public officials, community groups, and individual citizens were all involved in the process. Much of the technical information from the original 1990 study did not need to be duplicated; however, it was reviewed as part of this process.

Both the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and the Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Committee were consulted for their input at meetings during the process. Staff from the Parks and Recreation Department and other city departments were interviewed for the study.

All user groups of the Lincoln Recreation Center were polled during the survey to insure that no user group was left out of the process. The groups surveyed were area private schools, area churches, former Lincoln School graduates, area residence, local neighbors, educators, and the youth that attend the center. Several public hearings were held during this process to collect additional input from interested citizens.



Help us plan your Park!

It is time to update the Master Plan for the Lincoln Center/W A Tarrow Park Corridor for the College Station Parks and Recreation Department.

Because you live close to the park area, your recommendations, ideas and opinions are very important to our planning process. Please answer the following questions to facilitate and aid the College Station Parks and Recreation Department's Community Needs Assessment Team ascertain the kinds of activities and facilities you enjoy the most. Thank you for your assistance.

Date _____ **Circle your age:** 10 & under 11-17 18-40 over 40

Name _____ Address _____
(Name and address is optional)

1. How many persons at your address fall in each of the following age group?

- | Male | Female | | Male | Female | |
|----------|--------|-------------|----------|--------|---------------|
| a. _____ | _____ | 0-5 years | e. _____ | _____ | 21-30 years |
| b. _____ | _____ | 6-10 years | f. _____ | _____ | 31-40 years |
| c. _____ | _____ | 11-15 years | g. _____ | _____ | 41-50 years |
| d. _____ | _____ | 16-20 years | h. _____ | _____ | over 50 years |

2. How often does you or your family visit the Lincoln Center/W A Tarrow Park complex?

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| a. _____ Never | d. _____ A few times a week |
| b. _____ A few times a year | e. _____ 4 or 5 times a week |
| c. _____ A few times a month | f. _____ Every day |

3. If you or your family never visit the complex or only visit a few times a year, what changes would cause you to visit more?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. _____ Exercise room/equipment | h. _____ More gym space |
| b. _____ Swimming pool/water park | i. _____ Improve area safety |
| c. _____ More ball fields | j. _____ Upgrade basketball courts |
| d. _____ Enlarge/enhance playgrounds | k. _____ Diverse Programming |

- e. Reduce crowding
 - f. Lower membership fees
 - l. Improve access
 - m. Open more hours
4. When do you most like to use Lincoln Center/W A Tarrow Park Complex?
- a. Afternoon
(after work/school)
 - b. Evening
 - c. Weekend
 - d. Other _____
5. Should the Lincoln Center be open more hours? Presently 8-9 M-F, 9-5 Sat., closed Sunday
- a. Yes What hours? _____
 - b. No
6. Do you or someone in your family participate in any of the following sports activities. Check as many apply.
- a. Little league
 - b. Girls softball
 - c. Soccer
 - d. Basketball
 - f. Swimming
 - g. Boxing
 - h. Tennis
 - i. Track/jogging
7. If you or your families do not participate in any of the above activities, why not?
-
8. Please check your three favorite sports activities.
- a. Softball
 - b. Baseball
 - c. Basketball
 - d. Flag football
 - e. Soccer
 - f. Volleyball
 - g. Track & field
 - h. Swimming
 - i. Tennis
 - j. Other _____
9. Do you feel the park complex needs any additional facilities?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
10. If you think the park complex needs additional facilities, what facilities should be provided? Please check no more than eight items.
- a. Exercise room w/showers
 - h. Children's play areas

- b. Swimming pool
- c. Water park
- d. Outside basketball courts
- e. Adult softball fields
- f. Outdoor covered meeting area
- g. Jogging & fitness field
- h. Regulation track & field track
- p. Multi-use auditorium
- i. Tennis courts
- j. Inside basketball courts
- k. Boxing ring/training area
- l. Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts
- m. Soccer/football field
- n. Outdoor restrooms
- o. Outdoor lighting
- p. Other _____

11. What other recreational activities would you like to see offered?

12. What other programs would you like to see? Please select no more than six.

- a. Day care center
- b. Tutoring for grades 1-12
- c. Community education classes
- d. Big brother/big sister program
- e. Public health clinic
- f. Head start program (0-5)
- h. Cultural programs (dance, art, theatre, etc.)
- i. Branch/mobile library
- j. Senior citizens program
- k. Boy scouts/girl scouts
- l. Interurban trolley bus stop

13. If necessary, may we or the Lincoln Center Advisory Board contact you for follow-up questions?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. Please add any comments that you feel we should consider in our park design.

Thank You!

Data Results

2002 SURVEY RESULTS LINCOLN CENTER/W.A. TARROW PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATES

AGE CATEGORIES

AGES:	10 & under	11-17	18-40	over 40
TOTAL:	(3)	(14)	(67)	(49)

1. How many persons at your address fall in each of the following age group?

<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>		<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	
21	14	<i>0-5 years</i>	18	30	<i>21-30 years</i>
11	26	<i>6-10 years</i>	24	40	<i>31-40 years</i>
30	31	<i>11-15 years</i>	19	174	<i>41-50 years</i>
25	18	<i>16-20 years</i>	16	43	<i>over 50 years</i>

2. How often does you or your family visit the Lincoln Center/W A Tarrow Park complex?

<i>13 - Never</i>	<i>16 - A few times a week</i>
<i>42 - A few times a year</i>	<i>33 - 4 or 5 times a week</i>
<i>11 - A few times a month</i>	<i>18 - Every day</i>

3. If you or your family never visit the complex or only visit a few times a year, what changes would cause you to visit more?

<i>46 - Exercise room/equipment</i>	<i>8 - More gym space</i>
<i>51 - Swimming pool/water park</i>	<i>12 - Improve area safety</i>
<i>14 - More ball fields</i>	<i>30 - Upgrade basketball courts</i>
<i>23 - Enlarge/enhance playgrounds</i>	<i>14 - Diverse programming</i>
<i>9 - Reduce crowding</i>	<i>13 - Improve access</i>
<i>13 - Lower membership fees</i>	<i>16 - Open more hours</i>

4. When do you most like to use Lincoln Center/W A Tarrow Park Complex?

48 - *Afternoon (after work/school)*

39 - *Weekend*

33 - *Evening*

30 - *Other (mornings)*

5. Should the Lincoln Center be open more hours? Presently 8-9 M-F, 9-5 Sat., closed Sunday.

52 - *Yes*

81 - *No*

6. Do you or someone in your family participate in any of the following sports activities?
Check as many as apply.

14 - *Little League*

39 - *Swimming*

21 - *Girls' Softball*

4 - *Boxing*

27 - *Soccer*

34 - *Tennis*

58 - *Basketball*

35 - *Track/jogging*

7. If you or your families do not participate in any of the above activities, why not?

Most participants did not respond to this question, some stating that they did not have enough time.

8. Please check your three favorite sports activities.

34 - *Softball*

42 - *Volleyball*

31 - *Baseball*

33 - *Track & field*

72 - *Basketball*

38 - *Swimming*

37 - *Flag football*

13 - *Tennis*

17 - *Soccer*

5 - *Other*

9. Do you feel the park complex needs any additional facilities?

98 - *Yes*

35 - *No*

10. If you think the park complex needs additional facilities, what facilities should be provided?
Please check no more than eight items.

64 - *Exercise room w/showers*

36 - *Children's play area*

67 - *Swimming pool*

23 - *Tennis courts*

45 - *Water park*

12 - *Inside basketball courts*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 22 - Outside basketball courts | 12 - Boxing ring/training area |
| 15 - Adult softball fields | 16 - Boy/Girl Scouts |
| 26 - Outdoor covered meeting area | 25 - Soccer/football field |
| 34 - Jogging & fitness field | 25 - Outdoor restrooms |
| 17 - Regulation track & field track | 30 - Outdoor lighting |
| 32 - Multi-use auditorium | 5 - Other |

11. What other recreational activities would you like to see offered?

Archery, golf, dance, senior, gymnastics health classes, weight room, fishing, volleyball, table tennis, kid camp and clinics, and swimming.

12. What other programs would you like to see? Please select no more than six.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 47 - Day care center | 58 - Cultural programs (dance, art, theatre, etc.) |
| 53 - Tutoring for grades 1-12 | 20 - Branch/mobile library |
| 39 - Community education classes | 36 - Senior citizens program |
| 48 - Big Brother/Big Sister Program | 25 - Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts |
| 36 - Public health clinic | 19 - Interurban trolley bus stop |
| 36 - Head Start Program (0-5) | |

13. If necessary, may we or the Lincoln Center Advisory Board contact you for follow-up questions?

- | | |
|-----------|---------|
| 107 - Yes | 26 - No |
|-----------|---------|

14. Please add any comments that you feel we should consider in our park design.

The majority of participants in the survey did not respond with comments regarding park design considerations. Other comments were related to improving senior services, adding cultural monuments, expanding general services and academic assistance for youth.

Thank You!

Priority List of Needs

2002 Lincoln/W.A. Tarrow Park Master Plan Survey Priority List

Local community residents, area leaders, members of the Lincoln Former Students Association, Concerned Black Men of the Brazos Valley and Lincoln Recreation Center Advisory Committee reviewed the results of the recent survey. This survey's purpose was to gather community input addressing the needs of the community. This information will help to identify capitol improvement projects for the future. A public hearing was held December 9, 2002 at 6:45 p.m. at the Lincoln Recreation Center. A total of 28 citizens were in attendance. The group developed a list of potential improvements and then prioritized them into the following list. The proposed list of ideas will be given further attention in the development of the 2002-2003 Lincoln/W.A. Tarrow Park Master Plan Update.

Prioritized list:

1. **Multipurpose facility expansion** to encompass low-income daycare needs, senior program, auditorium (capacity 100-200) for civic and cultural programs and events, class rooms for community education activities, exercise room with equipment and showers/dressing area, and additional space for game room. Most in attendance were thinking of expanding to the south of the current building. Participants stated that future expansion on the south side of the existing complex could cause the playground to be relocated to another area in Tarrow park. Most in attendance agreed that available space on south side of Lincoln was acceptable.
2. **Additional parking** has been needed at the Center for many years. Current programming causes parking congestion on local streets in the neighborhood. Participants stated that any expansion in the building would most likely cause parking requirements to increase over current needs.
3. **Improving the children's play area** was given consideration based on future expansion, anticipated usage, safety, and security. When relocation of the playground is considered, shade for parents should be part on the plan.
4. **Upgrading and covering the outdoor basketball court** was recommended. With the increased use of the gymnasium by regular customers, Brazos Valley Boys and Girls Club sports, private schools and CSPARD Athletics, there are times when scheduling is a problem. Programming recreational activities for youth, coordinating a variety of functions and special events take time away from many local users who desire to use the gym. Spring and summer months bring about competition for gym space. Being able to transfer activities to a covered play area would suffice and give the staff the capacity to deliver services more effectively. During the summer as the program is at its maximum use inside the complex. Children do not have the option

to play in a safe area outside due to the heat. An outside covered area will give the staff more flexibility in planning a diversity of appropriate activities, easing overcrowding in rooms, hosting special events, and give the public more overall court time. The outdoor court is currently used seasonally due to heat and cold extremes. Special attention should be given to types of lighting and other utilities to maximize use.

5. **Splash/water playground/swimming pool.** Swimming is a favorite activity by many of the respondents who completed the survey. After discussion the group favored a splash/water playground over a swimming pool because of cost, difficulty in securing funding, intergenerational appeal, safety, and security. Design elements of a splash/water playground might lend itself to other potential uses during the off-season for youth and community activities.

Implementation Plan

This plan is the result of a critical analysis and review of the Master Plan that was originally developed in 1990. After careful review of the survey results and priority list, staff looked at the different options for placement of the new and upgraded facilities. Much care was incorporated into the process to insure the community wishes were addressed, as well as, the preservation of the existing athletic fields.

At a public meeting on December 9, 2002 a list of priorities was made. The item identified as the #1 priority was more building space for activities at Lincoln Center. Staff feels that this could be implemented in two phases. First with the addition to the existing building; and second with construction of a second building. The first addition should include shower/ dressing rooms and room for youth programming. And the second building should accommodate rooms for senior programming and a large multipurpose room that can be divided into smaller rooms for youth/ community programming. Most in attendance at the public hearing agreed that available space on south side of Lincoln Center is an acceptable location for the building.

The second listed priority from the public hearing was additional parking. This would have to be included with any building extension or addition. The soccer practice field west of the Lincoln gym was a high priority to preserve as a playing surface. Also, due to historical significance, the two buildings that are the only original structures left from the Lincoln School are important to the community. The community wants to explore ideas for preserving that portion of their history, and want to reserve the decision on those building until a later date.

Placement of each component, as recommended, is to maximize the land use and future operation of the facilities. The playground south of Lincoln Recreation Center is nearing the end of its life expectancy. The community has asked that it be relocated to the north side of the building near the gym and parking area. It is recommended to remove the current playground and install a new playground north of the gym near the parking lot.

Due to the underground drainage culverts that bisects the property, there are some limitations to what can be constructed over the culverts. Parking is an allowable activity and it is recommended to place the parking over it. It was felt that the covered basketball court would fit best in the corner of the parking lot. This will allow for greater "line-of-sight" supervision from the center. It also places it in close proximate to the center for multi use of that structure including youth programming and activities, dance practice, etc.

A water structure was incorporated in to the plan as requested by the community. The placement of that zero depth unit was the most difficult to locate. Staff wanted it to be in a highly visible space with easy access to the users. It was determined that clustering it with the other outdoor facilities would best serve all involved as well as detour vandalism.

Implementation of this plan is recommended to be accomplished in a multi year approach. Funding availability will determine in any decision to proceed. Multiple funding sources might be the best way to achieve successful completion of these proposed improvements.

Phasing of the Tarrow Park Project

- I. Existing Building Expansion and Additional Parking
- II. Basketball Court and Cover
Playground Relocation
- III. New Building and Parking Expansion
- IV. Water Play Area/ Splashpark

APPENDIX C

