

# LINCOLN SQUARE MASTER PLAN

## Lincoln Square Open House + Input Summary

Open House: May 30, 2019 | Old Town School of Folk Music, Szold Hall | 6pm



**These past twelve months have been a whirlwind of intense community outreach, project marketing, listening and learning. It goes without saying (but we're gonna say it) -- we couldn't have made this Master Plan without you!**

From our Kick-Off Idea Booth at Apple Fest in Fall of 2018 to our Final Community Open House and Draft Plan Reveal on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Old Town School of Folk Music – and everything in between -- you've made it clear what actions, priorities, and character considerations you expect to see in the coming years.

The steady flow of feedback collected through June 14<sup>th</sup> has helped to affirm and refine final plan elements now under review. The project team, commissioners, and advisory committee greatly appreciate all the time, energy and thoughtful input you have shared with us. The overview that follows summarizes the input received at the open house and collected thereafter via email correspondence, conversations, and online comments posted to the project website at [www.yourlincolnsquare.com](http://www.yourlincolnsquare.com).

The evening began with a wholehearted 'Lincoln Square' welcome from Ryan Warsing, SSA 21 Program Manager. Jodi Mariano, Project Manager and Principal with Teska Associates then provided an overview of the project, process, master planning purpose, and detailed draft recommendations. Erin Cigliano, Principal Outreach Designer with Teska Associates presented community engagement highlights including the timeline, online tools, top ideas, themes, marketing avenues, and outreach metrics. Sara Disney Haufe with Sam Schwartz Engineering spoke to both transportation and safety strategies, and Linda Goodman with Goodman Williams Group detailed market findings and actions unique to the varying corridors.

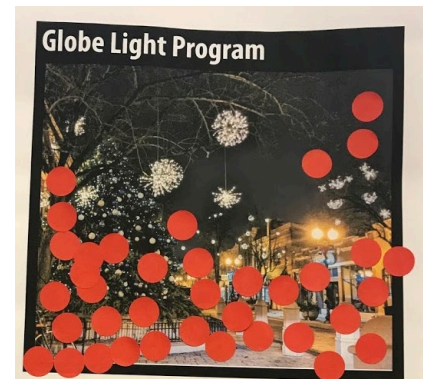
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## Let There Be... Feedback!

Following the presentation, open house participants were encouraged to circulate through a variety of topic specific stations. Each person was provided with 12 stickers to identify those improvements they felt would provide the most value to the community. High-boy tables sprinkled with post-it notes and markers were situated around the event space to encourage additional feedback. Tallies of the open house summaries along with quotes and feedback from both the event and website are noted below:

### NEAR TERM PLACEMAKING PROJECTS

Murals	44
Globe Light Program	37
Business Blade Sign Program	37
Mosaic Planter Pot Program	31
(SQU)Area People Places	26
Neighborhood Directory	26
Bike Racks	22
Gateway Poles and Banners	9



Votes of support at the May 30<sup>th</sup> Public Open House for the top three priorities highlighted above.

Highlights of input shared at Open House via post-its and via the project website:

- ***“Lincoln SQU(AREA) = Impactful & Awesome. The artwork/mini plaza on North Lincoln helps visually connect North Lincoln to the Square, while being a great neighborhood gathering spot. Our neighbors along N. Lincoln would love this!”***
- ***“Select a different color for the (SQU)area to minimize graffiti.”***
- ***“Fill + paint planters - perhaps give each planter to a group in the area that doesn't have a physical store - but keep with a theme in mind for it so that it doesn't look all hodge podged together. Add lighting, murals, repaint canopy above/under tracks.”***

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## WESTERN AVE/MONTROSE AVE PUBLIC PLACEMAKING



<b>Under the Elevated Tracks</b> Improve neighborhood walkway, wayfinding, seating and lighting.	44
<b>CTA Plaza + Gateway sign</b> Provide seating, greening and interpretation, accommodate Divvy	32
<b>Western Ave Streetscape</b> Develop landscaped boulevard Add plantings, furnishings and signage to already wide sidewalks	24
<b>Market + Events Plaza</b> Enhance paving and railing treatments, provide access to power	16
<b>Montrose Ave Streetscape</b> Add plantings, furnishings and signage as practical	12

*Highlights of input shared at Open House via post-its and via the project website:*

- ***“The L plaza should have seating & planters. Under the tracks could really be beautiful & have better ped/bike flow to avoid crosswalks.”***
- ***“Install upward jutting dynamic roof over CTA Platform that can be up lit and serve as a beacon, welcome sign and icon for the area, visible driving in both directions.”***
- ***“Main priority: Beautify + make safer under Western Brown Line Tracks; this is a BIG priority. It's dark, unsafe and does NOT at all reflect the beauty and care of our neighborhood. See under Paulina/Southport for great ideas: seating, planters, lighting, bright murals.”***
- ***“Access Western Brown Line from the west side of Western.” – 10x votes***
- ***“Add ‘Welcome to Lincoln Square’ banners or mini-arches along major streets at borders.”***
- ***“Omit seating under tracks, nobody will want to sit here, clean it up and add lighting.”***
- ***“Move Lincoln Statue to the CTA Station Area.”***
- ***“Western Ave plaza needs to be a destination to succeed. Long term development in the immediate area will aid in activating the space. More fests or farmers markets, etc.”***
- ***“Keep the signage near Western El up to date and take care of the trees there.”***
- ***“Add globe lights to Western Avenue.”***
- ***“Western Avenue: Develop as a boulevard with landscaped medians and safe crossings.”***



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- *“Plaza: Clean up tree grates, put up some murals on walls, perhaps some shipping container pop-up cafes, better lighting, sculptures, or community programming.”*
- *“Dream BIG! With LS having numerous arts venues, promote additional art and theater in the area. Purchase/negotiate long term usage of CTA plaza at the western Station for multi-story Arts and Theater complex. The architecture should be bold and forward thinking. Spaces to be multi-use as the building should be a constantly scheduled, energized complex. Consider allowing the building to span across and over the Farmer’s Market parking lot creating a covered 2 story covered market/event space/parking lot. (CTA bus access would still be maintained or reworked).”*
- *“Build Steel Garden trestle over Western Ave, the height of the CTA Tracks at north side, planted with trees and shrubs to “green up” Western Ave and buffer train noise.”*
- *“A Mural on the side of Waldorf would be wonderful. It’s very blank, doesn’t need to be.”*
- *“Make Lincoln between the Arches car-free on Sat or Sun from May – Oct. A single block, just 4 days a month, set aside for pedestrians as an escape from the constant traffic on Western and Lawrence aves. Giddings Plaza is charming but cramped, so expanding it, Euro-style, allowing people to stroll, or sit out at some cafe tables, and just enjoy the atmosphere at leisure doesn’t seem like much to ask. Businesses have alley access and nearby public parking lots already, and they’d hardly suffer from an increase in foot traffic. IMHO this needs to be part of any “master plan” for such a residential area.”*



View of current ped path beneath the Brown Line CTA Western Stop.

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## LAWRENCE AVE / ROCKWELL CROSSING PUBLIC PLACEMAKING



<b>Rockwell Crossing</b> Develop a shared street for community fests Incorporate temporary parklets	43
<b>Lincoln Statue Plaza</b> Reorient statue, add seating and greening, reinforce bus shelters	29
<b>Neighborhood Flex Space</b> Reinvent community garden as dog park / community flex space	21
<b>Lawrence Ave Streetscape</b> Incorporate comfortable seating areas at west Lawrence streetscape	18

*Highlights of input shared at Open House via post-its and via the project website:*

- ***“Rockwell Crossing Improvement: Rockwell between Leland and Eastwood has a lot of dilapidated store fronts that don't add much to the area. Would love to see more useful, neighborhood-friendly small businesses set up shop.”***
- ***“More areas designated for off leash dogs/dog park in the area parks(Maybe convert horseshoe lot at Welles since it needs significant repair).”***
- ***“Lincoln Square statue as a centerpiece. The namesake of our namesake should be more prominent and welcoming. This intersection should be an extension of the square entrance and blend together.”***
- ***“Don't take away the community garden / Wasn't a big donation just made to it?”***



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## LINCOLN AVENUE PUBLIC PLACEMAKING



<b>The Square</b> Develop a market street that calms traffic and supports fests	33
<b>North Lincoln Ave</b> Create bump outs, widened sidewalks and medians as appropriate	31
<b>Giddings Plaza</b> Relocate the stage, buffer the alley and add overhead light canopy	30
<b>Alleyway</b> Enhance alley with improved building facades and overhead improvements	30

*Highlights of input shared at Open House via post-its and via the project website:*

- ***“Continued improvement along North Lincoln. The Boomers mini-mall has been vacant for some time; planters, trees and outdoor seating along rh sidewalk would go a long way.”***
- ***“Enhance gateway to North Lincoln Ave at McDonald’s plaza (2x).”***
- ***“Keep sufficient sidewalk width for pedestrians.”***
- ***“Is it too onerous on traffic to close Lincoln for festivals? I think so.”***
- ***“Relocating the stage at Giddings Plaza is a great idea but make sure you keep it as something that doubles as a play area for kids – they love it now.”***
- ***“More music performances / events are needed in Giddings Plaza.”***
- ***“Side street bulbs are not needed; it would add clutter.”***
- ***“Bump outs along N Lincoln to discourage through-traffic to Western.”***
- ***“Traffic on Lincoln will be at a standstill if people are parallel parking on both sides.”***
- ***“Concern about dedicating roadway space to sidewalks and negative impacts on traffic.”***
- ***“Minimize places for birds to roost – no light canopy over the plaza.”***
- ***“Please provide a bulletin board with a see thru heavy plastic curtain where we can thumbtack lost baby socks, mittens and small toys.”***

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**General comments pertaining to the following categories are listed below:**

## **STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Replace ugly blue steel chairs – need nicer street furniture
- add bike racks with no logo in the middle – better for locking bikes up
- Supportive of this concept (2x)
- Don't care about seating on main streets, don't want to sit next to traffic and car exhaust
- When locating seating, ask if anyone would like to sit there. Is the view smelly or loud?
- Consider plants that can tolerate salts – many are killed after winter maintenance
- We need to plant many more new trees, especially on the side streets
- Restore / Add community gardens throughout the neighborhood
- Maintain existing planters / de-weed / de-trash
- Wide sidewalks along Lincoln south of Eastwood- add seating, sculptures, colorful paint, above-ground planters, Little Free Library, community bulletin board... something
- Incorporate landscape buffers / row of shrubs rather than fencing where possible
- Add decorative seating
- More large murals -- Large mural at 4879 N Lincoln would be great!

## **MAINTENANCE + CHARACTER**

- Enforce noise level/time ordinances: too much amplified music in Giddings Plaza, make acoustic only
- Encourage local businesses to promote local character beyond the Square
- When considering adding anything with a surface, imagine it with graffiti, as it eventually will be.
- All the physical improvements weaken if we don't improve policing
- Emphasize recycled and repurposed materials, sustainability, etc.
- Minimize surfaces that provide space for graffiti
- Replace the worn-out Horseshoe Court with Dog Park or Basketball Court
- Neighborhood beautification efforts in the neighborhoods surrounding the SSA Boundaries

## **PED + BIKE SAFETY**

- LSQ should have a vehicular circulator, like a trolley, that connects folks between commercial areas, transit stations and neighborhoods.
- Add dedicated bike lane: Lincoln Ave is becoming more utilized by bikes but from the curve west of Leland Street heading north, the way to continue biking north seems to dead end. Since W Leland between Lincoln and Western is extra wide, add a green painted bike lane running out to western and up western until it intersects with Lawrence Ave. Alternative: Sign bikes to travel east on Leland using the alley to access the bike lanes on Lawrence. Provide markings across Lawrence and signage to demark bike Xing
- Add bike racks on east side of Lincoln (currently none between Giddings Plaza and Lawrence)
- Possibly combine CTA bus stops at Lawrence / Western (Lincoln Statue)

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## DESIGN GUIDELINES / DEVELOPMENT

### General

- Create setback program that is in scale with street widths.
- Does the affordable housing include the 30% set aside? There should be inter-generational affordable housing so all can enjoy Lincoln Square. Affordable housing for artists / musicians, etc.
- I am all for anything that encourages the community to gather – cafes, seating, planters, direction/event signs and festivals – these are quality of life.
- How to encourage best architectural qualities? Aldermen influence? (quality windows/materials) Setbacks sound good.
- Lincoln Square lacks high speed fiber internet, and this inhibits development and employment
- Have we engaged in race-equity considerations in all these ideas?
- Buy vacant buildings and make into shared community green space.
- I hope that new development will still have a variety of appearances – buildings and areas with character, not just more square, smooth, brick rectangles... neighborhood has diverse, approachable, old/new feel that I love.
- With the closure of Pickles Playroom our neighborhood is now lacking an indoor plays space for kids. This is such a valuable resource for families, especially in the winter months. Perhaps a business could be recruited for the Women's Workout World space on Lawrence?

### Western / Montrose

- Density is needed, especially near transit (2x)
- There is too much density – do not increase it
- Promote walkability
- Maintain affordability
- Do not promote unregulated deconversions

### Lawrence Ave / Rockwell Crossing

- Redevelop parking lots along W Lawrence
- Get Burger King on Lawrence to give up its massive parking lot
- Proactively plan for MB / 5<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Bank Property (No Whole Foods)
- Repave Rockwell Crossing with pavers/bricks including intersections at N + S ends to create special zone. Add large scale, historic multi-part planters to historic streetlights. Cut bottom branches of trees to open up first floor of buildings visually. Provide financial incentives to improve store fronts; not a huge expenditure and would hugely improve this special part of our neighborhood
- The strip shopping parking lots should have city mandated black fences and landscaping.
- Bulldoze Walgreen's Building. Allow increase in height and FAR for new building to pay for improvements to Lincoln Statue Park and other proposed park improvements north and across Western. Billboard must be removed
- Buses tie up corner and block traffic and bikers along Lawrence on east side of Western. Move bus stop to west side of street so that traffic can flow more easily at Western. Future development could be required to be set back at first floor level to allow for additional width at sidewalk and covered protection for bus stop in lieu of standard stop canopies



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- Consider zoning changes/incentives/selling government owned property at Lawrence Ave west of Western as numerous buildings break the urban fabric of the area, creating a large stretch of vast nothingness. For example, build a multi-story building on the site of the Illinois' Dept. of Employment Security and allow the state to occupy tenant space rent free at either this location or when the MB Bank site is redeveloped. Consider allowing Burger King parking lot at west side of building to be sold and developed as its own parcel. It's not utilized, and all the gaps and parking lots cut off this stretch of Lawrence from that east and west of it. This would be a LONG term implementation but great futures come via planning now.

## Lincoln Ave

- Turn the public parking lot on the NE corner of Western and Leland into a parking structure to add additional parking and facilitate the closing of Lawrence to pedestrian only on weekends.
- Keep fast food restaurants out of Lincoln Square shopping area between Sunnyside and Lawrence
- Setbacks should be sensible to developers, consider zoning requirements, and adjacent neighbors
- Yes to glass doors and outdoor seating
- Extend Lincoln Ave across Lawrence: Add new stop light for traffic heading westbound on Lawrence to the east FACE of Lincoln Avenue. Extend sidewalk pavers across street and into park to tie the Lincoln Square Main Street to Lincoln Statue Park so that these areas feel integrated. Remove Lincoln Square arch which cuts the street off from the rest of the area. Install LED light pylons (just one idea) on both sides of the street, diagonally parallel to Lincoln to reinforce the concept. Continue these ideas at the triangular park at the SW corner of Western and Gunnison, continuing the conceptual re-linking of Lincoln Ave. That mini park could become a useful space if redesigned. Continue LED light pylons across street in front of McDonalds
- Currently no color at gateway to the Square; add planters, paint, colorful benches, art, etc.
- Lobby city and alderman to remove McDonald's tall signage. This should have been done as a condition for the new drive thru! I applaud the other who recommended this!
- Completely Re-envision the underutilized park in front of McDonalds with the creation of a large scale open air trellised structure, creating an urban room designed for art shows, musical performance, dance recitals, markets, religious services, holiday parties, food truck events and more. The eastern edge would be buffeted with a wide one-story masonry wall to buffer sound from Western and provide a base to the structure. A steel and wood frame would rise up and span across the park to the Lincoln Ave western edge. Various options for banners, lighting and covering would be designed to allow for unlimited temporary additions to the structure. The wall could be designed at the east face to be either a monument or historical marker for the area- an outdoor museum. Relocate Statue of Lincoln to Apex of Triangle facing southeast gazing south down Lincoln Ave. This short leg of Lincoln Ave could be moved west to its original location, making the park wider and minimizing the wasted space and parking in front of McDonalds.
- At the site of the T-Mobile, combine it and adjacent properties for 5-6 story high quality building- boutique Hotel, Senior Housing, Artist Live/Work Space, Non Profit Office Building, College.... Curving both corners like the Lincoln street curve could create our area's own iconic "Flat Iron" building like in NY or Northwest Tower (the Robey Hotel now) in Wicker Park. The building could form the backdrop to a new cool Urban Park in front of McDonalds
- North Lincoln Ave: This area seems to be the forgotten section due to the discontinuity of Lincoln Ave. Work with landlords of vacant storefronts to allow artists to work, perhaps subsidized by grants from the city, arts organizations or the alderman's office. Close the street for a street fair annually.

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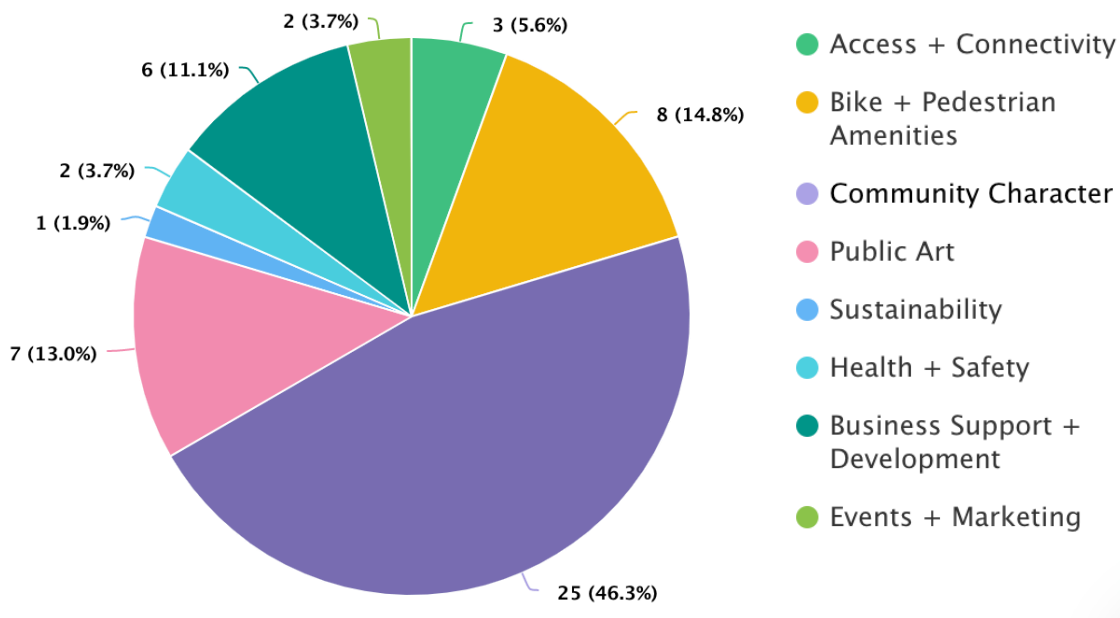
## ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

### Overview of Feedback + Traffic Received via the Project Website

Between the May 30<sup>th</sup> Open House and June 14<sup>th</sup> Comment Period, the following inputs were received via the project website, [www.YourLincolnSquare.org](http://www.YourLincolnSquare.org):

### 54 Additional Mapped Comments

Comments have been integrated and summarized via the summary above. The majority of feedback pertained to Community Character (25%), Bike and Pedestrian Amenities (15%) and Public Art (13%).



### 169 New Idea Contributions

Additional feedback was received via both the general idea tool, as well as the dedicated Draft Master Plan Review Page. Ideas and inputs have been summarized in the report above.

## NEXT STEPS

The Final Lincoln Square Master Plan is currently under review by the Commission. The approved and adopted plan will be shared with all in the coming weeks! Stay tuned!