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**MIMICO  
RESIDENTS  
SPEAK**

**TORONTO, MARCH 2012**

**A REPORT ON REVITALIZATION  
IN THE MIMICO-LAKESHORE  
COMMUNITY**

**~ BY THE MIMICO-LAKESHORE  
NETWORK**

**MIMICO:  
WORTH  
WORKING  
DREAMING  
FIGHTING  
STAYING  
WAITING  
HOPING  
PLANNING  
FOR.**



**MIMICO  
LAKESHORE  
NETWORK**

# Community Residents Speak:

## A Report on Revitalization in the Mimico-Lakeshore Community Mimico Lakeshore Network (MLN) Toronto, March 2012

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The revitalization of the Mimico-Lakeshore area of Toronto<sup>1</sup> is a matter of growing interest and concern for area residents, community groups, business people, and other stakeholders. The Mimico Lakeshore Network (MLN) of community groups was formed in the fall of 2011 to give voice to residents' perspectives.

High-rise condominium developments in the Humber Bay Shores (Motel Strip area) and a recent proposal in the midst of the residential community in Mimico-by-the-Lake - to develop the Amedeo Garden Court lakeshore property<sup>2</sup> with high rise condominiums up to 44 storeys - sparked MLN to call a community meeting. On November 15, 2011, 235 people came to express their concerns about the relationship between the Amedeo Court proposal and the process for the developing the Mimico 20/20 Vision.

Next, on December 7, 2011 the City of Toronto held a long-awaited community meeting to provide an update on the status of the development of the Mimico 20/20 Vision, providing an opportunity for the 250-plus participants to pose questions to the City and express their concerns.

As a result of community concerns expressed at the City's meeting, MLN held a five-hour workshop on February 11, 2012 attended by about 110 community participants who endorsed the key messages in this report as a contribution to the development of the 20/20 Vision.

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1 "The larger study area is generally bounded by Royal York Road to the West, the CNR tracks to the north, the Mimico Creek to the east, and Lake Ontario to the south. However, the focus is the commercial, mixed use and high-density residential uses abutting Lake Shore Boulevard West." (Staff Report For Information –Mimico 20/20 Revitalization Initiative –Terms of Reference Outline –Project Update, Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District, June 18, 2008)

2 "The site is located on the east side of Lake Shore Boulevard West and abuts Douglas Boulevard to the north" (Staff Report For Action – Preliminary Report – 2521-2543 Lake Shore Boulevard West, Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District, August 23, 2011).

The report summarizes the discussions and provides recommendations for revitalization. The recommendations have been captured under several major areas:

- height and density;
- housing mix and rental;
- heritage preservation;
- community assets;
- transportation;
- economic revitalization; and
- liveability.

The following provides a brief overview of key recommendations. A careful reading of the full report is required, however, to grasp the full scope of residents' interests and concerns.

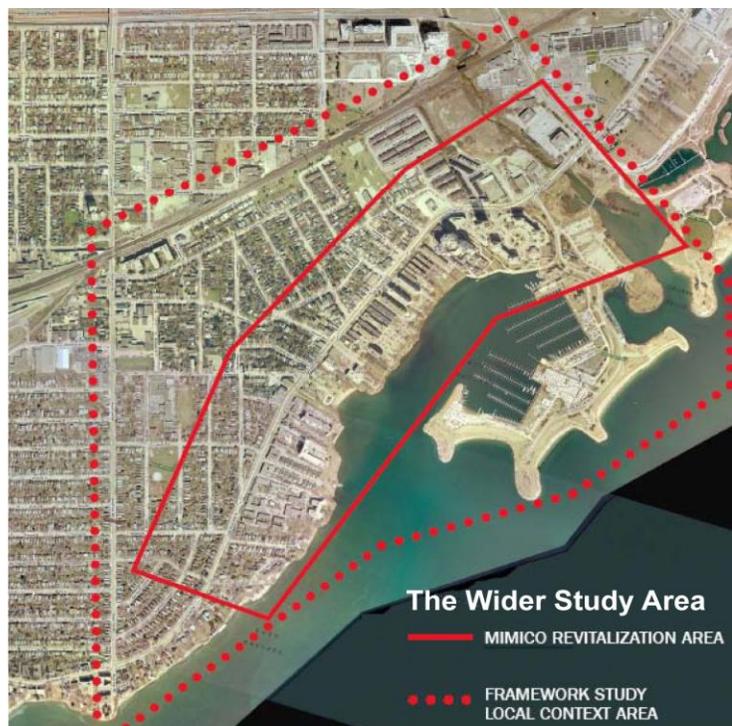
- *Height and Density*  
Implement the City of Toronto Mid-Rise Performance Standards for the Mimico area with a maximum height of eight storeys; allow for greater height up to 12 storeys at particular locations for proposals that offer exceptional design and benefit to the community; ensure setbacks from Lake Ontario so that the shoreline has open access to the public; undertake mixed use developments with varieties of housing types and built forms; avoid mono-cultures of whatever type; involve the community in assessing development applications; and ensure effective integration with existing neighbourhoods.
- *Housing Mix & Rental*  
Protect numbers of current rental units – one to one replacement in all redevelopment of rental housing; prevent disruption of tenants' lives; follow city's existing housing policies; promote many kinds of ownership; foster economic development providing jobs for local residents; favour various unit sizes for all household types including families.
- *Heritage Preservation*  
Uphold the benefits of heritage preservation; support the recommendation by Toronto Preservation Panel to designate all existing heritage elements of the Ormsby/Franceschini Estate under the *Ontario Heritage Act*; increase awareness of the area's history; promote re-use of historic buildings; avoid removing heritage buildings from their original sites.
- *Community Assets*  
Maintain public access to the Lake; require waterfront parkland dedication of land; bring section 37 funds into transparent processes that benefit the community according to community priorities; enhance the GO station area's potential; strengthen the amenities and facilities serving the residents.

- *Transportation*  
Envision and work for a pedestrian, cycling, and transit-user friendly community with its attendant reduction of speeds for traffic on Lake Shore Blvd; and ensure development contributes to these goals.
- *Economic Revitalization*  
Be aware that housing alone does not revitalize an area; promote mixed-use developments with offices and services that create jobs; expand the City Council's Implementation Committee for Mimico 20/20 with community representatives to contribute to the process. Support low and mid-rise housing development to encourage "walk to" shopping and connections to the street-level services.
- *Liveability*  
Foster diversity of all kinds; promote human scale development, and "green"; natural areas; ensure comprehensive approaches rather than partial solutions; plan for sustainable transportation; nurture social networks with community involvement, community spaces, water-based recreation areas, spiritual / cultural places.

Underlying all the specific recommendations in the report is the community's expressed and keen desire to be actively and substantially involved in the development of the Mimico 20/20 Vision. Perfunctory official "consultative meetings" are not acceptable as adequate. The overall goal is to undertake revitalization of the Mimico-Lakeshore community that embraces the full diversity of needs expressed within the community and by all stakeholders.

The MLN is committed to working with the whole community and the City to ensure that all voices of Mimico-Lakeshore residents are heard. The revitalization of the Mimico-Lakeshore community should endure over the long term and provide for the well-being of current and future residents living, working, and playing in a healthy community.

#### **Mimico-By-The-Lake Study Area**





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To: Residents of the Mimico-Lakeshore Community  
Community Groups  
Political Leaders  
Non-Profit Organizations serving the Community  
Business Leaders  
Interested Others

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The revitalization of the Mimico-Lakeshore area is a matter of great promise and deep concern. For decades, residents and other stakeholders have sought creative ways to develop a sustainable, liveable community and to steward the natural assets and beauty of the Lake Ontario shoreline.

A statement crafted at a public meeting held in June 2007 expressed the Vision of Mimico 20/20 as follows:

*Mimico by the Lake is a historic Toronto Community that is known for its unique lakeside location within Toronto's waterfront. It has exemplary public spaces and connections to and along the waterfront with trails, parks and places for community gathering and play; an attractive and vibrant main street that supports a mix of shops, services and community activities and is a draw for residents and others outside the area; housing choices and opportunities for renewed rental and ownership; and inclusive participation with active community life which celebrates its history, diversity, arts and culture.*

*Mimico 20/20 Workshop Report and Recommendations for Next Steps, June 2007*

In April 2009, the City of Toronto Planning Department convened a community charrette to build on this key vision statement. The event involved residents, local businesses, landowners and developers. In September 2009, the proceedings report entitled "Mimico 20/20 Revitalization Action Plan, Planning & Design Charette" was released along with "The Mimico-by-the-Lake Implementation Action Memo".

The Mimico 20/20 Vision remained dormant for a few years, while, landowners began planning the redevelopment of their properties. In April 2011, Longo Development Corporation submitted plans to redevelop Amedeo Garden Court. The high density residential proposal revealed the intent to build high rise condo towers on the shoreline – like these already appearing in the area east of Park Lawn Road to the Humber River.

Local community groups became concerned when they began to realize the scope, volume and height/density of the Longo proposal. Representatives of various community groups formed

(The Mimico-Lakeshore Community Groups Network - MLCGN) as a Steering Group (now called Mimico-Lakeshore Network – MLN) to discuss the Longo proposal and to assess how, if at all, the Longo proposal was connected to the Mimico 20/20 Vision statement and to the hopes and dreams of Mimico-Lakeshore residents.

The MLN held a public meeting to provide information to residents about the Longo proposal and the Mimico 20/20 Vision. On November 15, 2011, 235 community members gathered in the Polish Alliance Hall to learn more about the proposal and its relationship to the proposed Mimico 20/20.

With few exceptions, participants in the meeting expressed their alarm and dissatisfaction with the Longo Proposal. They stated clearly that this type of “redevelopment” did not meet their hopes and intentions for the revitalization of the Mimico-Lakeshore area. Speakers questioned any real connection between Mimico 20/20 Vision and the Longo Proposal. (A report of this public meeting is available.)

The City of Toronto Planning Department then held its first public meeting since the release in September 2009 of the “Mimico-by-the-Lake Implementation Action Memo”. The Etobicoke-York Community Council, in the autumn of 2009, had required such a meeting to be held. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011 in the John English School auditorium, the City of Toronto Planning Staff hosted a meeting and more than 250 Mimico-Lakeshore residents, local business people and developers attended.

Ward 6 Councillor Mark Grimes informed the participants of the Mimico 20/20 Vision status and the process leading to an Official Plan Amendment. City Planning staff, Heritage Preservation Services personnel and Urban Strategies Inc., planning consultants shared information and responded to questions.

Residents raised many questions at this event about the Longo proposal, about the lengthy delays in the overall Mimico 20/20 Vision project, and about what kind of understanding of the term “revitalization” was driving the process. Residents emphasized that revitalization is more than just providing the Lakeshore with high-end condo units.

Participants also emphasized the importance of meaningful community participation in the unfolding and implementation of the Mimico 20/20 Vision. They called for significantly more than the basic minimum formal consultation requirements.

The MLN evaluated the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting held by city officials and decided that the next steps should involve the community in identifying key issues and formulating constructive and positive input as a contribution to the official Mimico 20/20 Vision process. The MLN organized a community workshop to address these needs.

On a snowy Saturday, February 11, 2012, over 110 community members gathered for five hours in the cafeteria of John English School in response to the MLN invitation. All the local political leaders were invited. Regrets were received, including from Councillor Grimes, who declined to be part of MLN's community-based process. The Board of the Mimico Residents Association was also invited to this, and previous MLN events, but they chose not to participate as a group, though some individual members did take part.

"Community building" was the theme and spirit of the event. The stated purpose was:  
*"to provide an opportunity for the residents of Mimico-Lakeshore to further participate in the elaboration of the Mimico 20/20 Vision and the Revitalization/Redevelopment of the area by helping the community articulate in a concise and clear manner key aspects of their vision and by working to foster consensus of the articulated vision."*

Distinguished experts – Ken Greenberg, City Planner and Community Builder, and Elise Hug, Manager of the City of Toronto Tower Renewal Program - shared innovative ideas with the audience and offered creative insights into the value of community involvement in a revitalization process. Workshops were held on seven themes (in no particular order of importance) and each workshop was provided with a draft "position paper" previously reviewed by the MLN Steering Group. The purpose of the draft "position paper" was to begin the conversation. The workshop participants discussed the draft position papers and made recommendations to the full gathering of participants.

One outstanding item expressed was the concern for the residents most affected by the Mimico 20/20 Revitalization Initiative - - the tenants of the Apartment Strip. Recommendations include full protection of the number of rental units; the implementation of the City of Toronto's existing Official Plan Housing Policy, namely, the one to one replacement of all residential rental units demolished and careful attention to preventing the disruption of tenants affected by change. As many have pointed out since this document was circulated in draft form, the Mimico Resident's Association's published position on its website reflects this recommendation: "...any affordable residential units that are required to be demolished by way of redevelopment of the Mimico Waterfront should be replaced with new replacement rental units." The community is unanimous in its support of renters/tenants that live in the Apartment Strip.

In the plenary session, all the groups reported. Votes were taken to adopt the recommendations proposed by the various workshop groups. With minor amendments, the work of the workshops was overwhelmingly endorsed in the full plenary session of participants.

The report which follows is the cumulative work of the February 11<sup>th</sup> event, of the position paper discussed in previous MLN meetings, and the contributions of a number of local

community groups over the past eight months. Careful attention has been paid to recording and reporting the events so that the voices of participants are respected and heard.

To summarize:

- the revitalization of the Mimico-Lakeshore area is a matter of great interest to the community – that is revitalization that is comprehensive and creates healthy community is the goal
- they oppose the creation of a wall of high-rise towers along the waterfront
- they desire developments that respect current residents – owners and renters, apartment dwellers and single-family home owners; affluent and lower income households – and foster integration of eventual new residents
- they seek to strengthen and enhance the entire community, including its businesses and other social amenities
- they want to ensure substantial public access and enjoyment of the shoreline

The MLN Steering Group expresses its appreciation to all who have contributed so generously of their time to this community effort so far. MLN pledges to continue its active participation in the unfolding of the Mimico 20/20 Vision. The shared hope is that the Mimico-Lakeshore will evolve into a vital community of opportunity, mutual concern, and enjoyable living so that future generations can enjoy the benefits current residents cherish.

Other community groups and interested organizations and individuals are sincerely invited to share in this ongoing work for the Mimico-Lakeshore community. Please visit: [www.lakeshoreforum.ca](http://www.lakeshoreforum.ca) or contact [lakeshorenetwork@gmail.com](mailto:lakeshorenetwork@gmail.com) for more information.

The following community groups are represented on the MLN Steering Group.

Citizens Concerned about the Future of the Etobicoke Waterfront

Etobicoke Historical Society

Etobicoke Lakeshore Housing Task Force

Etobicoke-Lakeshore Faith Community Leaders Network

Island View Residents

Lakeshore Planning Council

Miles Road Residents

New Toronto Historical Society

Norris Crescent Coop

Ward 6 Community Action Team

For the Mimico Lakeshore Network,

The Editorial Group

*Harry Oussoren, Audric Montuno, Peter Shepherd, Anastasia Jakubasz and Carole Goyette*

## 2.0 HEIGHT AND DENSITY

### BACKGROUND

Height and density are key considerations in any revitalization or redevelopment plan. There was no mention made of these topics in the major documents concerning Mimico 20/20 until September, 2009, a full three years after the process began.

The Mimico-by-the-Lake Implementation Action Memo from the consultants Urban Strategies released that month states that based on “an economic assessment” undertaken as part of that study the total density should be in the range of 3.5 to 6.0 times lot coverage. The consultants added that it “may be sufficient to permit or provide incentive for property owners and developers to undertake redevelopment of these properties.”

Despite repeated requests for a copy of the economic assessment, including a Freedom of Information request within the last few weeks, we have been refused a copy of said study. Currently, the city’s position is that the study “at this time, is still a work in progress.”

### HEIGHT AND DENSITY COMPARISONS

Lacking that crucial document referred to in the implementation action memo as having been done 2.5 years ago, we are left to do some comparisons of our own. For example, the maximum gross residential density for the Motel Strip Secondary Plan is 2.0 times lot area and 165 units per hectare. But residential density in Humber Bay Shore Precinct Plan which is included in the Motel Strip Secondary Plan is now at 5.61 FSI and 667 units per hectare! The Floor Space Index (FSI) is the ratio of the total floor area of buildings on a certain location to the size of the land of that location.

The recent revitalization of Regent Park is a useful comparison that may provide us with some further insights. The land area for Regent Park is approximately twice the size of the Mimico 20/20 project area (Apartment Strip) and the number of units approximately the same. This means that the density for the Apartment Strip area is already twice as high as that of Regent Park.

Phase I of the Regent Park Secondary Plan is proposing to replace all of the residential rental units and add 3000 condominiums on the site for a ratio of 1 rental unit to 2.4 condominiums. The same ratio applied to the Longo properties development would generate a total of 1,346 dwelling units as opposed to the proposed 1,975. Keep in mind, that densities in the Apartment Strip are already twice as high as those in Regent Park. It is important to note that the workshop participants did not endorse the ratio 1 rental unit to 2.4 condominiums.

The community workshop participants are concerned, however, that a 'Motel Strip type development' is being planned for the Mimico area. This type of housing, in their opinion, is not conducive to supporting families and/or communities. The participants noted that the Apartment Strip unlike Humber Bay Shores, is adjacent to a low-density family-oriented residential neighbourhood.

Many residents who consider themselves well-informed citizens were not aware of the Mimico 20/20 Initiative. Those participants who did know about Mimico 20/20 expressed concerns about its lack of transparency and felt that community members should not have to apply pressure to get information from City Officials.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The workshop participants suggested controlling density through height restrictions, mid-rise performance standards and good design rather than lot coverage. They recommend the following:

#### Height:

- Implement the City of Toronto Mid-Rise Performance Standards for the Mimico area with a maximum height of eight storeys
- Allow for greater height up to 12 storeys at particular locations for proposals that offer exceptional design and benefit to the community
- Pre-determine the location of the buildings allowed extra height (minimum 8 to a maximum of 12 storeys)
- Develop a mechanism to minimize the impact of development
- Develop tangible controls, criteria, benchmarks that need to be achieved before extra height is considered

#### Performance Standards:

- Ensure that each development will impact the community favourably and must be the subject of rigorous review of studies – wind, shadow, traffic, etc.
- Implement a set back from the lake of more than 50 feet (the Humber Bay Shores neighbourhood has the advantage of Marine Parade Drive and public open space on the waterfront)

#### Good Design:

- Recommend that all development applications be reviewed by City's Design Review Panel with an opportunity for community input
- Allow for more mixed-use developments and a variety of housing and built forms to be incorporated into the revitalization plan
- Ensure that all new redevelopment proposal include a minimum of 20% family-oriented residential units

- Ensure that redevelopment strengthens the community; many people are dependent on rental/apartment residence

Implementation:

- Employ the community's vision, strengths, neighbourhood characteristics and guidelines to gauge development applications
- Focus on defining the character of the neighbourhood and how it should be continued and strengthened throughout redevelopment
- Create a community plan something tangible for people to buy into. It could perhaps be a visual.
- Finds ways to 'institutionalize' the involvement of residents with the planning process as suggested by guest speaker and planning consultant, Ken Greenberg

### **3.0 HOUSING MIX & RENTAL**

Housing is important to us all, renters and homeowners. In the city-organized Mimico 20/20 community meetings, people have always said housing is a priority for revitalization.

Homes are at the very heart of our community and therefore at the heart of the Mimico 20/20 Initiative. The vision must come from the people who live here and the local businesses that rely on us, because this is our community.

We want a mixed-use community, with households of all sizes and incomes, and businesses that support the people who live here now and will in the future.

We see a place where people step out of their homes to find nearby shopping, offices, schools, recreation facilities and meeting places so that community members can connect with each other.

Mimico can become a 'destination' for visitors to enjoy, and some will come to live here. People will come because Mimico is attractive, interesting, friendly and a community where we have neighbourhood connections with the people around us.

We see Mimico welcoming carefully considered and paced changes that support the people who are living here today and the people who will live here in the future.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Housing:

- Attractive and welcoming housing for all people (in line with the Mimico look and feel)
- Neighbourhoods with a variety of housing for a healthy mix of households:
  - A mixture of housing density that respects the character of Mimico as an urban village
  - A mix of housing sizes for all the household types to meet the needs of Toronto's population - singles, couples, families and seniors, including people with disabilities
  - A mix of housing forms for ownership and rental – single-family homes, town-homes, apartments etc., to provide for all types and sizes of households
- Many kinds of ownership - market housing, rent-to-buy, co-ownership, condominiums, etc.
  - Affordable housing for low and middle income households; (rent geared to income 25-33% of total income)
  - Increased purpose-built rental and co-op housing to ensure a healthy mix
  - Family-oriented condominium units

We recommend that the City be encouraged to abide by existing policies including:

- Housing development that conforms to the City of Toronto's Official Plan Housing Policy
- Maintain one-to-one replacement of affordable rental units in all redevelopment of rental housing
- Protect the current combination and percentages of affordable housing
- Prevent the disruption of the lives of tenants whose rental housing is being renovated or replaced; accommodate the tenants on-site or in the immediate neighbourhood
- Increase the number of affordable rental units in the area

Neighbourhood:

- Neighbourhoods that are safe and integrated with the Mimico community
- Recreation and play spaces in each neighbourhood close to homes
- Local retail, services and offices that serve the Mimico community
- Mixed-Use Buildings to include more employment in the area ( Live, Work, Shop & Play)
- Good connections to the rest of the city by all forms of transportation
- Community-based planning for all housing revitalization

#### **4.0 HERITAGE PRESERVATION**

##### BACKGROUND

The existing heritage elements of the Ormsby/Franceschini Estate located in the Amedeo Garden Court apartment complex were listed under the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 2006. On April 1, 2011 the Toronto Preservation Panel adopted a report from Heritage Preservation Services recommending designation of all existing heritage elements of the Estate under the *Ontario Heritage Act* but the Etobicoke York Community Council (April 21, 2011) subsequently referred the matter to the Toronto Planning Department to be considered as part of the Mimico 2020 Revitalization Initiative.

At the same time, the Longo Corporation submitted an application to redevelop the Ormsby/Franceschini Estate. The preliminary report prepared by Toronto Planning staff notes that review of the application will include “devising an appropriate approach to the site’s identified heritage features” (though none of the features appear on the site plan that Longo submitted with the application).

The current Toronto Official Plan (OP) states that “Our heritage buildings, districts and landscapes create a unique sense of place and a rooted sense of local identity and continuity for Torontonians.” It furthermore says that “Heritage resources on properties listed on the *City’s Inventory of Heritage Properties* will be conserved”.

##### PRESERVATION OF THE ORMSBY/FRANCESCHINI ESTATE

Heritage planning principles favours saving heritage buildings and landscaping features on site in their current locations. Moving buildings or structures destroys their context and hence their story and historical significance.

The buildings and landscaping elements (garden/stone walls along Lake Shore Blvd West) should be preserved in their entirety and integrated into the redevelopment of the site. Any discussion of tradeoffs (i.e. this building is more important than that building etc.) should only be judged by the heritage planning professionals in the City of Toronto planning department. It is important to support what the heritage planning professionals in the city have to say. There may come a time when these type of decisions need to be made but it is very important that the heritage planning staff make that call and be supported by the community and those interested in the heritage of the property. Any questions related to tradeoffs should be referred to the heritage planning professionals that the city has to advise them.

## MIMICO BUILT HERITAGE RESOURCES STUDY

In the late fall of 2011, the City of Toronto retained a heritage consultant to undertake a built-heritage (e.g. architectural) resources study as part of the Mimico 20/20 process. According to the Scope of Work document, the goal of the study is to “provide inventory data and recommendations for further detailed work to ensure the protection of all individually significant and collective Cultural Heritage Resources (CHR) in the study area, and to effectively integrate the CHRs with future planning and development stages”. “The findings of these investigations will be collated in a single Final Study Report, culminating in recommendations consistent with the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* and the Ontario Ministry of Culture’s *Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties*. The work on the study continues.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants agreed that: “For Toronto to become a world class city, it must respect, protect, preserve and celebrate its history”. The participants made the following recommendations:

- Support the recommendation by Toronto Preservation Panel to designate all existing heritage elements of the Ormsby/Franceschini Estate under the *Ontario Heritage Act*

### Benefits of preservation:

- Heritage brings economic benefits and vitality to the city in the form of increased tourism
- Preservation of historical buildings raises the appeal, attractiveness and desirability of neighbourhoods and their property values
- Support a mix of uses to keep the area vital but also keep reminders of our past
- Promote the re-use of historical buildings including Wesley Mimico United Church
- To protect the character of the area, establish a Mimico Heritage Conservation District (same for New Toronto and Long Branch)

### Promote our history:

- Use social media to teach people about local history; what makes this area interesting, letting people know why this area is wonderful
- Encourage Open Doors, Jane’s Walk, Heritage Toronto Walk’s and Garden Tours in the Mimico area
- Employ history and its built form as a stepping stone to help define the ‘spirit of the essence’ of what is truly Mimico (For example, the rebuilding of Duke Cycle along Queen Street West respected the adjacent height, spirit and character of the area)
- Help influence political decision-making in favour of protecting our history

## 5.0 COMMUNITY ASSETS

### ACCESS TO THE LAKE IS A PRIORITY IN REVITALIZATION

The Mimico waterfront, as with the Motel Strip, is the location that is driving intense condofication and waterfront monster home demands. The recent purchase of a sliver of a waterfront by the province for \$4.3-million for trail extension illustrates the long absence of a planned dedication zone that could be realized over time through redevelopment. All the water's edge could be dedicated as a requirement for redevelopment of the existing apartment blocks. The recent plans for condo developments in Mimico suggest the access on the lake will really be for condo dwellers – not the neighbourhood.

- Mimico has long been significantly deficient in parkland – notably neighbourhood parks linked to the waterfront.
- The Windows-on-the-Lake policy (a view or access at road ends near the lake) is only realized in a few areas in Mimico. All street endings near the water need to be claimed and legally defined as park. For deep apartment lots with no road access, easements are necessary at proper spacing to continue north-south access to the lake penetrating the wall of apartments on the south.

### CREATING COMMUNITY FACILITIES THROUGH NEW DEVELOPMENT CHARGES

New development often promises benefits for the community. We need to ask whether the current values for future community assets negotiated from density and height increases are fair and where are these community benefits. So far Mimico has been short changed.

Since land is scarce, recent residential proposals include very tall buildings that are out of scale with the neighbourhood and often greatly exceed allowed density. The proposals, in most instances, do not include parkland but rather cash-in-lieu. The current formula for calculating the financial contributions for development understates the value.

- The current value of land in this area with no buildings on it is in the order of \$65 to \$95 a square foot buildable. Therefore, the value of the land alone on a site where buildings of 62 and 40 storeys are proposed is more than \$50-million. The community deserves a minimum 20-per-cent slice of that amount to fund parklands, improvements to community assets and to remedy deficiencies.
- The missing facilities can be integrated vertically into new developments from the ground up, paid for by developers as part of the approval for extra densities. Note that North York condos on Yonge St. did not accommodate schools so students close to an existing school are being bussed far away because of over-crowding.

Section 37 benefits are discretionary and negotiated on a project-by-project basis. The community is cut out of the calculation process. If Mimico 20/20 or any other study's recommendation is to succeed, it must define the scope and extent of deficient parkland and open space needs, recreation, social and cultural needs and determine the Section 37 funding that would be required to build and operate those facilities. Currently, Section 37 funds are far too low to have an impact.

- The Section 37 contribution for the 11 Superior Avenue redevelopment application was originally approved at \$250,000. Then, the amount was reduced by \$100,000 when it reached City Council, this represents a 40-per-cent drop.
- The 2175 Lake Shore Blvd West condo development had a similar reduction in Section 37 contribution calculations. This development was approved with a cap of \$1.9 million for combined contributions of cash-in-lieu of parkland estimated to be \$800,000-\$900,000 and Section 37 monies (\$1.1 million). The final appraisal for cash-in-lieu of park totaled \$1,597,800 (almost twice as much as originally estimated). Capping limits in the formulation by City staff resulted in a loss of revenue to the city in the order of \$800,000. The Section 37 monies were subsequently reduced to \$303,200.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The workshop participants reviewed the above-noted suggestions and after much discussion recommended the following:

#### Access to Lake:

- Preserve and greatly increase visual and physical access to the lake through the Windows-on-the-Lake policy and entrench the requirement into the land development process
- Require each developer to give up a portion of their property at the waterfront as part of the 5-per-cent parkland dedication.
- Resolve the long-standing question of ownership of water's edge land as part of the land dedication process.

#### Parkland Contribution:

- Require 5-per-cent parkland dedication, as opposed to cash-in-lieu
- But if cash-in-lieu is used, it should be based on fair market value

#### Section 37 Funds:

- Base section 37 funds on the true value of the land
- Re-invest the funds in the community and have the use decided through formal community consultation

**Creating/Adapting new Community Assets:**

- Preserve the heritage of area.
- Investigate Mimico GO Station as a node for revitalization, where the development agreement could lead to creation of new community assets such as a swimming pool and community centre and redevelopment of others.
- Adapt community assets so there is flexibility in their use as demographics change.

**Implementation:**

- Use same approach as former City of Toronto used when widening a major arterial road –that is, require landowners to give up their frontage to the street whenever their property is rebuilt or modified.
- Ensure that Mimico Ave. is considered as part of the Mimico 20/20 redevelopment initiative.
- Consider having a fixed link between mainland and Humber Bay Park West such as a bridge.
- Leverage Lakeshore Arts and other community entities as an asset.
- Expand the boundaries of the Mimico 20/20 study north to the Gardiner Expressway, west to Royal York Road, east to Parklawn
- Balance development along both sides of Lakeshore
- Partner with supportive agencies
- Make presentations to City Council of professional calibre. High quality visualization communicates well to decision makers

Community Assets include John English Junior Middle School, Mimico Adult Centre, Lakeshore Arts, Lake Shore Blvd. West as an asset by itself, and Mimico Centennial Library. Concern was expressed about the commercial viability of Lake Shore Blvd. West businesses.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NOT PRESENTED AT THE WORKSHOP**

Mimico is short of parkland. An additional 12 acres of parkland are needed for the area identified as Mimico 20/20, especially neighbourhood parks.

Mimico 20/20 study is focussed on a parkland priority area under the City's Official Plan. A developer is required to contribute 0.4 ha of parkland per 300 units. There is a 15-per-cent cap for sites that are one to five hectares in size. This cap only increases the over-all parkland deficit.

- For example in the Longo proposal, the parkland contribution should be 2.63 ha (6.5 ac). This is calculated on the basis of the number of units times .04 ha per 300 units. However in fact, because this 3.4 ha site is smaller than 5 ha, the parkland contribution

is calculated on the basis of 15% of the residential portion of the land. This results in a parkland contribution of only 0.33 ha (0.81 ac).

## 6.0 TRANSPORTATION

### BACKGROUND

Historically, Lake Shore Boulevard West and the Long Branch streetcar have been the link that ties together Mimico, New Toronto and Long Branch. While auto traffic still flows freely through these communities to and from downtown, the 30 km long 501 Queen streetcar line, one of the longest streetcar routes in North America, is too long to provide regular dependable service to the Lakeshore.

The Etobicoke-Lakeshore experiences traffic congestion when the Gardiner/Queen Elizabeth Way is backed up, slowing car traffic and the streetcar to a crawl along Lake Shore Blvd West.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants at the February 11, 2012 community consultation session envisioned a pedestrian, cycling and transit-user friendly area; an active lifestyle Mimico community. They supported a more balanced mix of transportation modes, less reliance on the automobile and better utilization of the road space by filling the gaps in the transit, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

Furthermore, as part of the redevelopment process, the participants recommended that all new development be required to encourage alternative means of transportation by creating pedestrian - friendly environments, proper bicycle parking areas and user-friendly transit stops including more bus shelters.

### TRANSIT

#### GO Trains:

- Enhance Mimico and Long Branch GO stations as “transportation hubs” by improving pedestrian & cycling infrastructure and facilities (i.e. more bicycle parking)
- Increase the frequency and reliability of TTC transit service to the GO stations to help reduce reliance on autos and GO parking
- Coordinate with new development at Mimico GO station a “new” east end platform connection (north and south of the tracks)

#### TTC:

- Restore the 507 Long Branch streetcar and extend the service to Dundas West Subway Station (originally the streetcar ran from Long Branch to Humber Loop)
- Extend the streetcar only lanes on Lakeshore Blvd West all along the Motel Strip to bypass the frequent auto congestion queuing to get on the Gardiner Expressway

- Replace the 145 Humber Bay Premium Express TTC route with a regular express route to attract more riders, like the 192 to the airport or the 191 to Humber College North Campus
- Implement a Timed-Transfer for the Lakeshore communities to allow travellers to stop, shop and then re-board transit

#### VEHICULAR

- Reduce speeds on Lake Shore Blvd West, to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists and streetcar users (this implies a re-design of Lake Shore Blvd)
- Improve vehicular access through a new underpass from Lakeshore Boulevard West along Legion Road to the Mystic Point community

#### CYCLING

- Mimico has the potential to provide safe cycling routes through its north-south road connections
- Implement the 2001 City Cycling Plan
- Create a bike lane between Norris Crescent Park and First Street
- Build a cycling path along Mimico Creek (near Park Lawn Rd.) to Queensway and further north
- Create safe routes to schools and connect recreational facilities to parks, open spaces and libraries
- Separate bike lanes from traffic as much as possible
- Complete the Birmingham Bike cycling trail (this would add to safe routes to schools)
- Widen the waterfront trail (behind the Apartment Strip) to include a dedicated cycling trail

#### FUNDING

- Finance better transit for the area through minimum fixed development charges
- Intermodal: TTC/GO fare integration to avoid riders having to pay 2 fares

## 7.0 ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

### BACKGROUND

Redevelopment of housing alone will not ensure the successful revitalization of the Mimico area. For the commercial area to prosper there need to be opportunities to create jobs and mixed-use developments that include offices and services with new jobs to the area.

Councillor Milczyn's recent report to City Planning & Growth Committee "Balanced and Bolder: Recommendations for Strengthening Toronto's Official Plan" describes an Urban Village Strategy for economic renewal that involves attracting activity throughout the day, week and year and recommends horizontal and vertical mixed use developments.

In November 2002, City of Toronto Council adopted the new City of Toronto Official Plan. Chapter 2 of the new Plan contains policies regarding the Avenues (Reurbanizing Arterial Corridors). The Avenues are important corridors along major streets where reurbanization can create new housing and jobs while improving the look of the street, shopping opportunities and transit service. The Avenues will be transformed incrementally and will change over many decades.

### REVITALIZATION

The workshop participants first defined what people consider is involved in revitalization, which they noted can mean different things to residents and developers. The participants characterized it as redevelopment on a human scale. That means also development of a community where people know their neighbours in an area, where the various income levels are represented and where a sense of community is fostered. Both residential and commercial needs must be factored in.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The participants recommend the following:

- Implement the City of Toronto Official Plan recommendation for a comprehensive Avenue Study along Lakeshore boulevard West in the Mimico area to help examine the existing situation, consider the opportunities and help identify the need for a mix of residential and commercial/employment
- Invite key stakeholders such as the BIA, Storefront Humber, the banks, the beer store and other business owners to an event so they can present their views on what needs to be done to help revitalize the commercial strip

- Expand the Council-appointed Implementation Committee for the Mimico 20/20 to include representatives of the entire community. (Revitalization of Mimico will not be successful unless residents, community organizations, the Business Improvement Area representatives, City staff, and elected officials work in partnership to implement whatever plan is approved)
- Make available the economic assessment that was mentioned as having been undertaken according to the Mimico 20/20 implementation memo of September 2009
- Encourage low and mid-rise development (because single family homeowners are more likely to shop in an area than residents of a high rise, moreover, even in high rises the lower the floor number, the more connected the residents are to the street)
- Prohibit any commercial development from locating directly on the waterfront
- Encourage employment opportunities (just increasing the population does not translate into economic revitalization)

#### LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

##### Employment Opportunities:

- Create new jobs (studies show that those who work in an area are much more likely to spend in that area than those who just reside there)
- Move Storefront Humber, a significant employer in Mimico, to a new multi-purpose building that would have the Storefront operations on the lower level or levels and residential uses above. That solution would allow the existing Storefront Humber building to become a community centre

##### Revitalized Business Sector:

- Create linkages between Mimico North, Mimico South (Legion Road underpass) and Humber Bay Shores to encourage neighbouring residents and others to shop in Mimico
- Encourage new shops on the east side of Lake Shore Blvd to facilitate shopping on both sides of the street like in New Toronto
- Attract new businesses; an upscale pub, outdoor patios, organic markets, more restaurants, put in public benches and office buildings along with bike paths and pleasant spaces to walk
- Maintain industrial/commercial/office zoning in the area

## 8.0 LIVEABILITY

### BACKGROUND

Mimico is a relatively small community with a variety of neighbourhoods. The proposed Mimico 20/20 Project is an opportunity to create a liveable, walkable, diverse, income-mixed community where there are employment opportunities and plenty of open spaces, meeting places and recreational opportunities.

Councillor Milczyn's newly released Study/Report Paper (2011) entitled "Balanced and Bolder: Recommendations for Strengthening Toronto's Official Plan" refers to excellence in Design, pedestrianization of existing right-of-way, climate-sensitive designs, reclaiming underutilized space and implementing strategic lighting

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants in the February 11<sup>th</sup> event stressed the need to integrate development with the lakeshore's unique assets. The waterfront is a feature to be enjoyed by all residents, not simply those who might live in accommodations near the shoreline. Do not "commodify" the lake nor "condofy" the shoreline is the message from the local residents.

#### Demography:

- Create neighbourhoods for all ages – large residential units attract families
- Create a diverse community of people of different backgrounds, socio-economic means, ethnicity and race, disabled and able-bodied, orientations, home owners and renters
- Discourage homogenization of the community; neither gentrification nor 'condofication' are desirable ends (monocultures are not healthy)

#### Urban Design:

- Use competitive (RFP) Request For Proposals (a procurement process, where an invitation is presented for suppliers, often through a bidding process, to submit a proposal on a specific commodity or service) where possible to encourage innovative public and private development
- Ensure human scale mixed use development – no buildings above a maximum of 12 storeys
- Ensure all development is "green" – find large-scale ways to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and increase innovative approaches to building
- Ensure that vegetation/plants/trees/green spaces are factored into design
- Foster a comprehensive approach to redevelopment rather than individual spot development; or partial solutions (e.g. storm water renewal needs to be integrated into the overall re-think of the area, not treated as a specific problem to be solved)

**Natural Environment:**

- Protect natural heritage and vegetation/plants/trees/green spaces
- Ensure natural land features
- Respect waterfowl and other birds in all planning aspects of the area
- Increase the number of parks and play areas

**Sustainable Transportation:**

- Encourage full community engagement in walk-able streets; basic retail, services available nearby
- Encourage cycling; study best practice/outcomes for biking design and policy
- Make the streets children-friendly
- Develop “safe routes to schools” and parks
- Facilitate transit use – avoid people having to use their cars, e.g. when shopping, going to clinics, bank & post office, etc.

**Social Networks:**

- Encourage full community participation in planning matters right from the beginning; ensure integrated planning, not piecemeal site-by-site developments in isolation
- Create community meeting spaces, town squares, and open spaces
- Ensure places where the human spirit can grow: faith community edifices, cultural facilities, education programs, etc.
- Encourage water-based recreation

## 9.0 SURVEY RESULTS

A survey was distributed to the participants of the February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012 Community Workshop. The following is a summary of the information obtained.

Over 110 residents attended the workshop and 50 copies of the survey were returned.

The majority of attendees were from the M8V postal code area - the area south of the CNR railway tracks. Only two individuals came from the M8W- Long Branch area and one from M8Z – west of Royal York Rd and north of CNR tracks and two of these participants used to live in Mimico.

Many newcomers to the area attended the workshop. This number is balanced out by an equal number of individuals that have lived in the community for over 15 years (see table 1 below). The vast majority plan to live here forever or as long as possible.

	# yrs lived in area
	0 - 5 yrs (12)
	5 - 10 yrs (7)
	10 - 15 yrs (3)
	15 - 20 yrs (5)
	20 - 25 yrs (3)
T	25 - 30 yrs (2)
	30 - 35 yrs (6)
T	35 yrs & over (5)

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Table 1- No. of Years lived in the Area

Of the 50 surveys, 22% are renters and 72% home-owners. Only 4 of the attendees work or own a business in the area.

57% indicated that they often shop in the area and 37% sometimes. All business owners/local workers shop in the area often.

22% of the participants have children that attend local schools.

Half of the participants in attendance belong to a local organization.  
66% of the attendants use public transit.

The participants ranked Height & Density as the most important issue followed by Community Assets (received highest number of votes for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place in terms of importance), Transportation, Housing and Heritage. Other issues of concern include keeping crime low, walkability and commercial viability. Liveability was not listed therefore votes were not assigned.

35 individuals of the 50 surveyed chose to rank Mimico 20/20. Twenty individuals believe that Mimico 20/20 is a good and viable plan for revitalizing and redeveloping Mimico, 5 felt it was somewhat viable and 10 participants did not feel it was so viable (see table 3).

Table 3 – Ask to rank Mimico 20/20 as a viable plan for Revitalization

51% were very	<b>5 (10)</b>
aware of the	<b>4 (10)</b>
Mimico 20/20	<b>3 (5)</b>
Initiative followed	<b>2 (2)</b>
by 28% that were	<b>1 (8)</b>

somewhat aware. 11% had never heard of Mimico 20/20.

Only one individual indicated that the workshop did not meet his/her expectation. All agreed to more meetings.

42% heard about the meeting through a flyer; 27% through e-mail notification and approximately 27% through friends/ local groups.

## 10.0 RESOURCES

Award Winning Avenues & Mid-Rise Buildings Study:

<http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/midrise-FinalReport-Section3-Part1.pdf>

Balanced and Bolder: recommendations for Strengthening Toronto's Official Plan, Office of Peter Milczyn, Chapter 5

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-43269.pdf>

City of Toronto Heritage Inventory

<http://app.toronto.ca/HeritagePreservation/setup.do?action=init>

City of Toronto Official Plan, 2010, Section 2.2.3 Avenues: Reurbanizing Arterial Corridors, p. 2-15 to 2-17 [http://www.toronto.ca/planning/official\\_plan/pdf\\_chapter1-5/chapters1\\_5\\_dec2010.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/official_plan/pdf_chapter1-5/chapters1_5_dec2010.pdf)

City of Toronto Official Plan, 2010, Section 3.1.2 Housing Policy, p. 3-12 to 3-17

[http://www.toronto.ca/planning/official\\_plan/pdf\\_chapter1-5/chapters1\\_5\\_dec2010.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/official_plan/pdf_chapter1-5/chapters1_5_dec2010.pdf)

City of Toronto Ormsby/Franceschini (Mimico Estates) Designation Report

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2011/pb/bgrd/backgroundfile-36799.pdf>

Design Criteria for Review of Tall Buildings Proposals - City of Toronto:

[http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/tallbuildings\\_udg\\_aug17\\_final.pdf](http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/tallbuildings_udg_aug17_final.pdf)

Pages 66-76

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/te/bgrd/backgroundfile-32477.pdf>

Eight Guiding Principles in the Conservation of Built Heritage Properties:

[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/InfoSheet\\_8%20Guiding%20Principles.pdf](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/InfoSheet_8%20Guiding%20Principles.pdf)

Mimico Beach Estates Blog

<http://mimicoestates.blogspot.com/2010/04/ormscliffemyrtle-villa-estate.html>

Ontario Heritage Act

[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage\\_act.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_act.shtml)

Ontario Heritage Tool Kit

[http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage\\_toolkit.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/heritage/heritage_toolkit.shtml)

Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada:

<http://www.historicplaces.ca/media/18072/81468-parks-s+g-eng-web2.pdf>



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP  
FEBRUARY 11, 2012  
POSITION PAPER

Lakeshore planning Council Website: newspaper articles and public comments in support of the 507 proposed

<http://lakeshoreforum.ca/transportation>

Reinstate the 507 Streetcar Facebook Group