

**Mimico-By-The-Lake Community Study –  
Request for Direction**

<b>Date:</b>	January 30, 2007
<b>To:</b>	Etobicoke York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward No. 6 – Etobicoke Lakeshore
<b>Reference Number:</b>	07 103514 STE 30 TM

**SUMMARY**

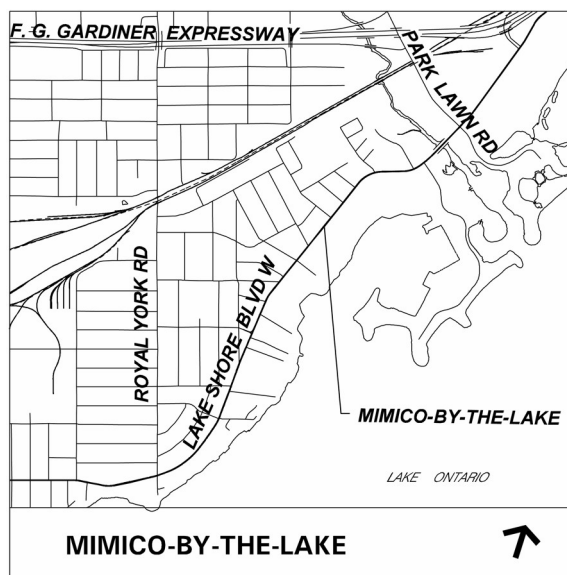
This report responds to the September 13, 2006 direction of Etobicoke York Community Council that requested the Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District to report on the next steps involved in moving the “Mimico by the Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community” initiative forward (see Attachment 1).

The purpose of this report is to seek Council direction for Planning to facilitate a wider public consultation and participation process. It is expected that the results of this process will provide Planning staff with a basis to recommend a suitable implementation strategy prior to proceeding with the next phases of the project.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council direct staff, in conjunction with a public consultation facilitator if necessary, to engage residents and stakeholders in preliminary discussions regarding



- community issues, needs and objectives;
2. City Council direct staff in consultation with the local councillor, to issue the appropriate notices for the public engagement process to landowners and residents within the area roughly bounded by Lake Ontario, Royal York Road, C.N. Railway tracks and the Mimico Creek; and
  3. City Council direct staff to report to EYCC on the findings of the community consultation process along with recommendations on proceeding with an implementation strategy.

### **Financial Impact**

Approval of these recommendations may result in the requirement of a public consultation facilitator who is to engage residents and stakeholders in preliminary discussions regarding community issues, needs and objectives, as contemplated in Recommendation 1.

Based on past experiences an expenditure of approximately \$7,000 would be necessary to obtain a public consultation facilitator. If required, this facilitator would be funded from City Planning's Growth Studies (2006) Capital project (Account # CUR028-09), which is carry forward funding from the 2006 Capital Budget and has been Pre-Approved for spending in 2007. There will be no future year financial impact associated with approval of these recommendations.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

### **DECISION HISTORY**

On September 13, 2006, Etobicoke York Community Council requested the Director, Community Planning, Etobicoke York District to report on the next steps involved in moving the “Mimico by the Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community” initiative forward. This document was brought forward to initiate a formal community revitalization process following discussions between the local Councillor and area residents. The document preliminarily identifies some of the opportunities, challenges and potential implementing mechanisms to secure revitalization of the Mimico apartment strip and surrounding area. The document also reiterates a desire in seeking broad participation from all stakeholders throughout the process.

### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

Planning staff last studied the Mimico area in detail in 1983, producing a directions report entitled The Mimico Study. Although the study area was generally bounded by Lake Ontario to the south, the Queen Elizabeth Way to the north, the Mimico Creek to the east and Dwight Avenue to the west, the study’s main focus was on the lands lying

south of the Canadian National Railway. The report recommendations were not implemented by the former City of Etobicoke and little has occurred since then in terms of revitalization especially along an approximately 3 kilometre section of Lake Shore Boulevard West between Miles Road to the west and Luisa Street to the east. Many of the conditions identified in 1983 are still present today and will likely form the focus of any revitalization project. These include: blocked public access/view corridors to the waterfront; dilapidated appearance of the commercial strip and rental apartment housing stock; need for enhancement of local parklands; and the need for public infrastructure improvements.

In 2000, City Council passed a by-law designating the Commercial (C) zoned lands fronting onto Lake Shore Boulevard West between Allen Avenue to the west and Burlington Street to the east as the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area, followed by a by-law in 2001 adopting the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Plan (see Attachment 2). The purpose of the Plan is to implement a range of public and private property improvement projects. The Plan provides any future study process with an additional implementation tool and potential community improvement resources made eligible under this designation.

The Official Plan identifies the lands abutting Lake Shore Boulevard West from Royal York Road to Mimico Creek as an Avenue on Map2 – Urban Structure. Avenues are important corridors along major streets where reurbanization is anticipated and encourages the creation of new housing and job opportunities while improving the pedestrian environment, shopping opportunities and transit service for community residents. To date, a formal Avenues Study has not been undertaken for this section of Lake Shore Boulevard West and presents itself as a further option in selecting an appropriate implementation tool under the community study process.

The latest major local initiative is the Mimico Waterfront Linear Park project, originally proposed in the 1983 study. Funded under the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Initiative through a contribution agreement between the federal, provincial and municipal governments and the Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, Phase 1 of the Park is now under construction. The project represents a direct multi-million dollar investment in the community, and can provide a timely opportunity to view the integration of this initiative within the context of wider community objectives, including those identified through the Mimico 20/20 exercise.

## **COMMENTS**

As described in the preceding section, Planning staff has considered some of the background conditions relating to the Mimico area, including previous and current initiatives and the significant findings contained in the Mimico 20/20 document. Prior to recommending an appropriate formal study process/implementation strategy, Planning proposes to engage the public through a broader based community consultation exercise. With the possible assistance of a public consultation specialist to manage a potentially wide array of issues and expectations and in selecting the most appropriate public

forum(s) (“town hall” meeting, workshop, open house, etc.), the initial consultations will aim to obtain a wider and more comprehensive representation of community issues, needs and objectives.

Planning staff believe that seeking an early, collaborative, transparent and community focussed consultation process would assist in building a consensus on issues, objectives and a course of action.

Once completed, Planning staff intend to report back to EYCC in the late second quarter of 2007 on the results of the proposed preliminary community consultation process, along with recommendations on proceeding with an implementation strategy including more detailed budget implications.

## **CONTACT**

Matthew Premru, Planner  
Tel. No. 416-394-6004  
Fax No. 416-394-6063  
E-mail: [mpremru@toronto.ca](mailto:mpremru@toronto.ca)

Michael McCart, Senior Planner  
Tel. No. 416-394-8228  
Fax No. 416-394-6063  
E-mail: [mmccart@toronto.ca](mailto:mmccart@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

---

Gregg Lintern, MCIP, RPP  
Director, Community Planning  
Etobicoke York District

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Mimico by the Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community  
Attachment 2: By-law 702-2001 (Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Plan)

**MIMICO-BY-THE-LAKE**

***PROJECT 20/20: A PERFECT VISION FOR OUR  
COMMUNITY***

A group of concerned residents and I met in the Fall of 2005 about the state of the waterfront, conditions of rental housing and the make-up of the business district in Mimico-By-Lake. The group, called the Mimico Planning Action Council (MPAC), wanted to formulate ideas and prepare a blue print advising on steps that should be taken to tackle various issues and enable the residents and businesses to move forward on a plan to revitalize the community.

Subsequent to several meetings and brainstorming sessions, the group has come up with a potential model to be implemented in the Mimico area to further enhance the living conditions in our community.

On April 28, 2006, I orchestrated a half-day visioning conference conducted with Developers, Land Owners, Key City Personnel, Resident’s Association Executives, BIA Executives, and special guest, world renowned architect Jack Diamond. The purpose of the conference was to seek input on how to start the process on re-creating Mimico by the Lake.

A document titled ‘Mimico-by-the-Lake: Project 20/20 A Perfect Vision of our Community’ follows below listing the various steps that we have identified as opportunities that welcome us, issues that need to be dealt with, steps that need to be taken and various challenges that we all face.

-----  
**Memorandum of Understanding**

**Opportunities**

- Create a village atmosphere with a vibrant character.
- Develop access to the waterfront
- Establish water views, view corridors
- Expand parkland and further extension of the waterfront park system and trail/environment and facilities improvements
- Design harmonious rental and ownership housing
- Refresh and revitalize Main Street Retail

- Engage the community in consultation and design process

### **Foreseeable Challenges**

- Achieving City Policies on enhancement of Rental Housing
- Balanced Housing Stock
- Attracting new businesses on our main street
- Cost and Funding for the project

### **Implementing Mechanisms**

- Community Consultations
- Political Leadership
- Subscribing to City initiated programs e.g., economic development, affordable housing, TRCA, Beautiful City
- Assistance of Consultants to initiate relevant studies e.g., Avenues Study
- Formulation of Developer-Community Partnerships

We believe that the above points are a definite start and would assist in creating a viable and bustling village atmosphere in Mimico-by-the-Lake. It is an exciting journey and we would like to invite you to be part of this.

We, the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_, agree in principle to move project 20/20 forward and actively participate given that the above listed points are taken into account

**Attachment 2:**

Authority: Etobicoke Community Council Report No. 7, Clause No. 14,  
adopted as amended, by City of Toronto Council on July 24, 25 and 26,  
2001

Enacted by Council: July 26, 2001

**CITY OF TORONTO**

**BY-LAW No. 702-2001**

**To adopt a community improvement plan for the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area.**

WHEREAS the Council of the former City of Etobicoke has, by By-law No. 839-2000, passed October 5, 2000, designated lands in Mimico-by-the-Lake as a Community Improvement Project Area;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Plan attached hereto as Schedule "A", is hereby adopted.
2. The City Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to make the necessary application to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval of the aforementioned Community Improvement Plan.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 26th day of July, A.D. 2001.

CASE OOTES,  
Deputy Mayor

JEFFREY A. ABRAMS,  
Acting City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

## **SCHEDULE “A”**

### **MIMICO BY-THE-LAKE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

##### **1.1 Designation of the Improvement Area**

In approving the 2000 Capital Budget for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department, Toronto Council included funding for the Commercial Façade Improvement Program. The budget process identified a number of Community Improvement Plans (CIPs) in the City, including four within the former City of Etobicoke, where in fact only two have been designated. The areas identified in the former Etobicoke, by staff of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department, included: Long Branch, New Toronto, Mimico Village and Mimico-by-the-Lake. Funds for the commercial façade improvement grants are approved in the 2001 Capital Budget for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism.

On October 5, 2000, Council for the City of Toronto adopted By-law No. 839-2000 thereby designating the Mimico-by-the-Lake Commercial Area as a Community Improvement Project Area for the purpose of implementing a range of public and private property improvement projects. The Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area is located in the former Village of Mimico in southern Toronto, formerly the City of Etobicoke. This area includes the lands fronting onto Lakeshore Boulevard, generally between Allen Avenue and Burlington Street. The existing land use designations along this stretch of Lakeshore Boulevard include Commercial-Residential Strip uses to the north, and Commercial-Residential Strip, High Density Residential and Open Space uses to the south. The lands are currently zoned Commercial (C) in the Mimico By-law. The boundaries of the area are set out in the attached map. This amendment applies to the same Project Area as designated by City of Toronto By-law No. 839-2000.

##### **1.2 Objectives of the Plan**

The overall objectives of this Plan are designed to achieve the Etobicoke Official Plan Community Improvement goals, as follows:

1. to prevent the physical deterioration of the hard service infrastructure;
2. to revitalize and preserve the existing commercial strips where feasible;  
and
3. to examine existing development and plan for future development that is compatible.



It is anticipated that these goals will create a strong shopping and business core, an improved level of service to the community, as well as establishing an area that is aesthetically pleasing in its design. As a result, it will assist in encouraging private and public investment and stimulate the revitalization of the adjacent industrial and residential areas.

The intent of these improvements to the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area is to define this area as a distinct shopping area and further to establish it as a vital commercial mainstreet in the former City of Etobicoke.

### 1.3 Proposed Improvements

Proposed improvements to be undertaken in the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area are:

- (a) aesthetic improvements, including but not limited to: tree and flower planting, street lighting, signage, street furniture (e.g., benches, planters, etc.);
- (b) sidewalk reconstruction, special paving, replacement and realignment of curbs, and on-street parking; and
- (c) commercial façade improvements to improve the visual and physical presence of buildings.

### 1.4 Commercial Façade Improvement Program

The City's Commercial Façade Improvement Program budget was increased from \$480,000.00 in 1999 to \$936,000.00 in 2000 to address service leveling. City Council recommended new project areas in the former municipalities of Toronto, Etobicoke and East York. The Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area was chosen as one of the new areas eligible for grants under this program because it meets the following criteria:

- (i) it has an existing Business Improvement Area;
- (ii) the area is designated by Toronto Economic Development as an employment revitalization area;
- (iii) the retail strip urban form, typically with one or two floors of housing above, is appropriate for façade improvement; and
- (iv) the community has the potential for creating new private re-investment.

Grants are only available, however, to commercial building owners whose properties are in designated areas covered by Community Improvement Plans under Section 28 of the *Planning Act*. This can only be achieved if the Official Plan contains appropriate

provisions relating to community improvement which covers the lands to be designated for community improvement.

## 2. AUTHORITY

### 2.1 Authority Provided by Section 28 of the Planning Act

Once a By-law has been passed designating an area as a Community Improvement Project Area, Section 28 of the *Planning Act* authorizes Council to provide for the preparation of a plan suitable for adoption as a Community Improvement Plan for the Community Improvement Project Area.

Among other things, the Act makes provision for the City to request the authority to make grants or loans to registered or assessed owners of property within Community Improvement Project Areas towards the cost of rehabilitating land and buildings in conformity with a Community Improvement Plan. Further, with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing's approval, the City can do so even where a grant or loan would constitute bonusing under Section 111(1) of the *Municipal Act*.

### 2.2 Etobicoke Official Plan Community Improvement Plan

Subsection 28(2) of the *Planning Act* provides that the council of a municipality which has an Official Plan which contains provisions relating to community improvement, may by by-law designate the whole or any part of an area covered by such an Official Plan as a Community Improvement Project Area. The Etobicoke Official Plan contain provisions relating to community improvement which among other matters designated the entire area south of The Gardiner Expressway (formerly the Queen Elizabeth Way) in South Etobicoke as a Community Improvement Area. Implementation of the Etobicoke community improvement policies requires designation of specific Community Improvement Project Areas and the preparation of Community Improvement Plans.

Chapter 10 of the Etobicoke Official Plan provides for the maintenance, rehabilitation and improvement of the residential, industrial and commercial areas. More specifically, in the phasing and allocation of community improvement funding in commercial areas, Council will have regard for:

- (i) the need for streetscape improvements;
- (ii) encouraging economic revitalization; and
- (iii) the need for rehabilitation of buildings and the potential for benefiting from a Business Improvement Area.

This Community Improvement Plan for Mimico-by-the-Lake provides the framework to facilitate the implementation of these Official Plan policies.

### 3. THE CITY'S COMMERCIAL FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The City's Commercial Façade Improvement Program provides grants to commercial building owners whose properties are in designated areas covered by approved community improvement plans. The purpose of the program is to improve the front exterior facades of commercial buildings by restoration, redesign and renovation. The program is an effective tool for facilitating economic revitalization in selectively targeted commercial districts. Benefits of this program include:

- (i) \$4.20 of private façade re-investment for each dollar of City funding;
- (ii) preservation and enhancement of architectural and historic features;
- (iii) new shoppers and more profitable local businesses;
- (iv) enhancement of residential land values;
- (v) more desirable places to live, shop and visit;
- (vi) partnerships between the city and local businesses; and
- (vii) increased assessment values and growth.

Access to the Commercial Façade Improvement Program will assist the Mimico-by-the-Lake Business Improvement Area in their efforts to renew the area and complement other past revitalization initiatives including existing streetscape improvements. It is recommended that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing be requested to grant the authority to the City to make grants or loans to registered property owners in the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area under the Commercial Façade Improvement Program as described in this Plan.

#### 3.1 Commercial Façade Improvement Program Accomplishments

The City has given \$1,430,000 in grant partnerships generating approximately \$6,000,000 in renovation since the program commenced in 1996. In 1999, the program was available in eight designated retail strip revitalization areas. City Council has recommended extension of the program to a further 15 retail strips within the City including the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area.

The program has been and continues to be an outstanding success. The local business people in these areas and in other areas have suggested that the program should be expanded to other areas of the City.

#### 3.2 How the Program Works

The program is available for a 5-year period and extensions are considered on a case by case basis.

The applicant must be a registered property owner within a community improvement project area with an active revitalization program. The applicant may only apply once for a property.

A review committee for each façade improvement area consisting of local business people and residents considers the applications submitted and recommends to the City a grant to an established maximum or to not approve the application. Approved grants cover up to 50% of the total cost of eligible improvements. The current maximum grant varies from \$10,000 to \$20,000 depending on the area of the City. The grant can be in the form of either a cash payment or a property tax credit.

The applicant enters into an agreement with the City in accordance with a schedule to complete the work. Upon completion of the agreed to improvements and receipt of the paid invoices, the City reimburses the applicant with the agreed upon grant. All City taxes in arrears must be paid before the grant is issued.

### 3.3 Character of the Community Improvement Project Area and Possible Façade Upgrades

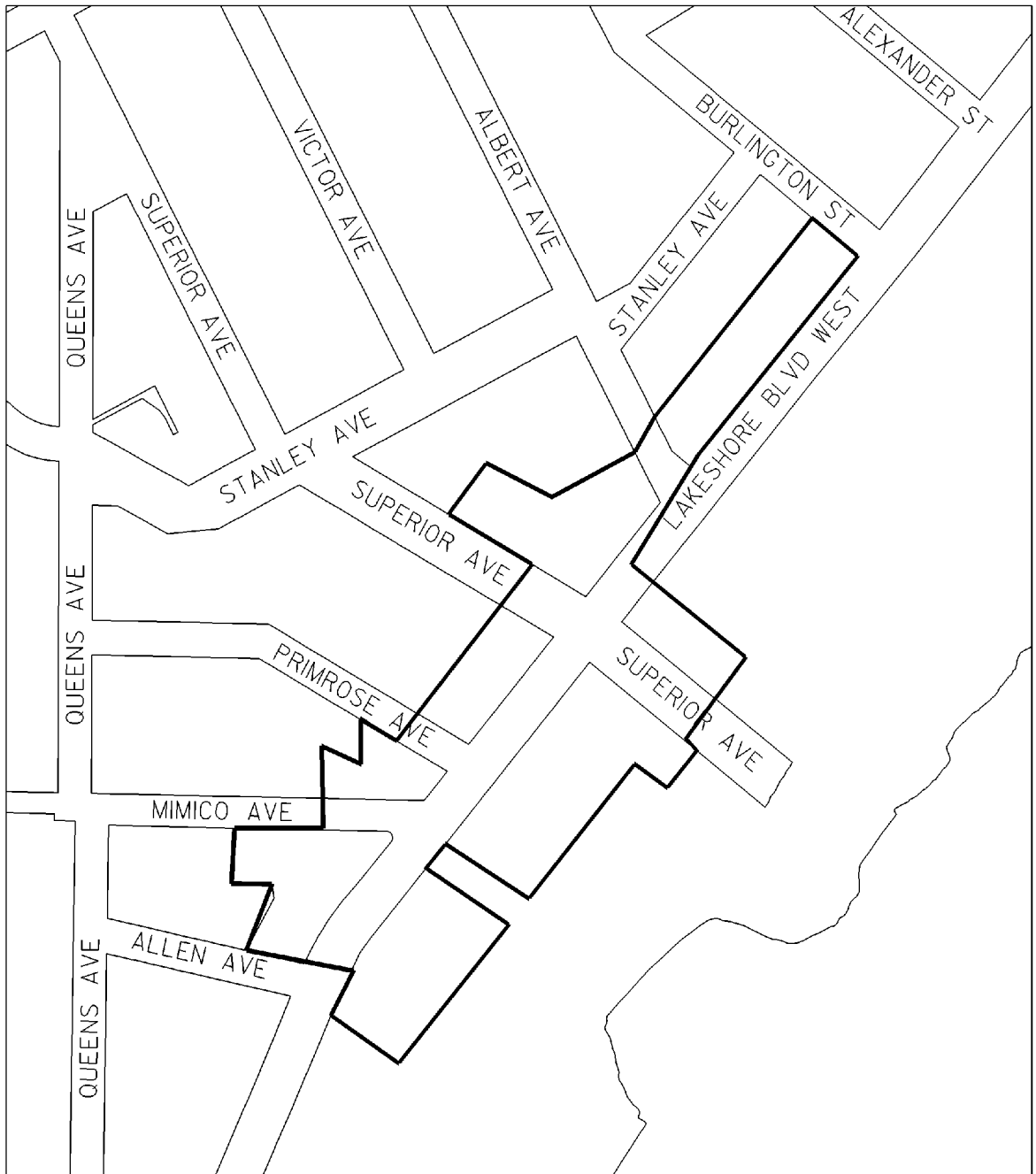
The area is a traditional main street with few suburban influences. The retail frontage is relatively continuous from east to west. Of the businesses in the area, most are local convenience shops and services. There are few vacancies.

The street wall is primarily characterized by one and two storey brick and stone facades with retail at grade and apartments or offices above. Most of the facades are sound structurally, although many of the buildings have not been maintained regularly and reflect an unkempt appearance. This condition negatively impacts the area's appearance.

Staff of Economic Development, Small Business and Local Partnerships held information sessions for each Business Improvement Area (BIA), as well as joint meeting of the four BIAs in South Etobicoke. An Information Session was held on May 23, 2000 for business operators and property owners within the subject BIA and CIP areas. These meetings were attended by over 120 individuals from the local area. The consultation process was well received, and anticipation of the program was positive.

A public meeting of City Council was held on September 20, 2000 to consider the designation of the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area. Etobicoke Community Council on July 11, 2001 also held a statutory public meeting to consider the adoption of this Community Improvement Plan for the Mimico-by-the-Lake Community Improvement Project Area.

The improvement programs detailed in this Plan will be administered by staff from various City Departments.



Mimico-by-the-Lake  
Community Improvement Project Area