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Submission to Scarborough Council meeting to be held July 17, 2020

Scarborough Community Council – July 17, 2020 meeting

Re: Item # SC16.3 – Golden Mile Secondary Plan Final Report (Ward 16, 20, 21 – Statutory: Planning Act, RSO 1990)

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July 16, 2020

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The Golden Mile Impact Network (GMIN) Steering Committee consists of 7 local non-profit agencies that serve the Golden Mile area and surrounding communities. Our steering committee is made up of a diverse group of community service agencies that provide a wide array of services to everyone from children to seniors. We include Warden Woods Community Centre, West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre, Working Women Community Centre and the Victoria Park Hub, Labour Education Centre, Woodgreen Community Services, YouthLink and Catholic Crosscultural Services.

Since beginning of our work in Fall 2018 we have engaged over twenty organizations who also serve the Golden Mile and surrounding Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. In addition to this engagement with the community service sector we've also engaged 450 residents through a variety of methods including community forums, surveys and other means. We are pleased to have connected with the City of Toronto throughout the duration of this work to convey the priorities that we believe would best deliver inclusive growth and renewed prosperity to all residents in the area. We encourage the City of Toronto and private sector developers to advance a vision of city-building which centres the needs of marginalized residents.

As a result of our community engagement process we continue to advocate for three key priorities that have emerged for residents and local organizations in our network:

- 1. Access to Affordable Housing,
- 2. Economic Opportunities, and

- 3. Community Spaces & Services.

1. Affordable Housing:

At the January Scarborough Community Council we shared with you that securing decent affordable housing is a major challenge for residents in the area. We also shared our emerging definition of 'affordable housing' which our constituents have rallied around – housing must be: dignified, with equitable living conditions and include a depth of affordability geared to income at less than 30% of net income. This means, taking into account cost of basic utilities, and units should be suitable for seniors living with disabilities, as well as, larger family sized units.

We know that for many rents in the community are increasing and responsible development must be a priority as the area changes. We also want to acknowledge the diverse range of housing that is critical for a mixed community including rental and ownership options. It is important to acknowledge that for some residents supportive services must be in place to support their ability to maintain their housing and this can best be delivered through partnerships between developers, government, funders and community agencies. We are prepared to work collaboratively with developers and the City to achieve this vision.

2. Local Economic Opportunities:

The redevelopment of the area stands to offer opportunities to residents to achieve more economic success. Many residents in the community are un- and underemployed. The focus in Official Plan Amendment 499 Section 5 Economic Development and the priorities of job creation and job preservation are critical to ensure that the community has access to good quality jobs. Our table is pleased to see the inclusion of a reference to an 'Innovation Hub' in partnership with an academic institution that can work to strengthen opportunities for local business development in the area. In May and June 2020, we consulted with 10 social service agencies about lessons learned during COVID19 and confirmed that support for marginalized groups employment initiatives that focus on start-to-finish pathways are critical. This need is particularly amplified due to the pandemic and in local NIAs. To ensure residents can equitably leverage opportunities, strong collaboration with employment and social services, schools and others in the area is important to help prepare and enable residents to achieve economic success. We are committed to supporting residents in accessing good local jobs as the neighbourhood changes.

3. Community spaces and services:

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Through our engagement within the neighbourhood we believe that residents will value an approach of 'services first' which ensures that the necessary supports and services from daycare to schools as well as other human and community services continue to be maintained and enhanced throughout the redevelopment and as new residents move into the area. We want to underscore the importance of the policies articulated in Section 10 on Community Services and Facilities to support the needs of community members and non-profit service providers in the area as development occurs.

- Timely and Adequate Service Provision: In our surveys of over 400 service users we learned that travel from neighbourhoods as far as Wexford, South-west Scarborough, and Ionview/Kennedy – all located along existing major transit routes. Marginalized residents are transit bound, and they will travel more than 2 km to access services, i.e. South-West Scarborough to Victoria Village.
 - A local feasibility report titled 'Case 4 Space @ 313 Pharmacy Ave' produced for West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre (WSNCC) highlights an existing pressure on recreation facilities along with a sense of urgency for expansion. This neighbourhood expects 20% growth in the next 15 years. Combined with any improvements to transit service on Victoria Park Avenue and Warden Road, we anticipate a cumulative impact on existing and expanded future recreation services.
 - In order to continue meeting service demands, and needs of current and future residents, careful planning of community space and services with an emphasis on timely delivery in each development phase is key. This will be critical to alleviate pressure from existing service infrastructure, without disrupting resident access to services.

- Strong Community Collaborations: We heard from local non-profits that for these services to be able to remain in the community, it will be important for rents to be affordable and as the vast majority of services do not currently own their space, there will need to be opportunities for non-profits to own their space or have secure long-term tenancies. The GMIN is currently moving forward to investigate and prioritize community space needs in consultation with agencies and service users. Non-profit agencies such as WSNCC are historically embedded in the neighbourhood, going back to 1976 when it was the West Scarborough Boys and Girls Club. We are excited to work together with developers, the City and other community partners to explore opportunities to co-locate, coordinate and integrate our services in new ways, ensuring efficient service delivery and better accessibility to the much-needed supports for community members.

As we mentioned in January we believe that trusted non-profit agencies can help to play a role in bridging the interests and needs of existing residents with other stakeholders. The non-profit sector can play a meaningful role in delivering the vision articulated by the secondary plan. We look forward to continuing the conversation with city staff as well as city elected officials to achieve the best outcome for the neighbourhood and local residents in the future.

Thank you for your attention.



Luanne Rayvals, Senior Manager, Victoria Park Hub
Working Women Community Centre

On behalf of GMIN members:

Catholic Cross-Cultural Services,
Labour Education Centre,
Warden Woods Community Centre,
West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre,
Woodgreen Community Services,
Working Women Community Centre,
and
YouthLink