

on the map



PHOTOS COURTESY OF VANDYK

The first of nine condo towers is coming to a 55-acre (22-hectare) plot known as the Mimico Triangle.



The intention behind the Mimico Triangle is to create a vibrant, mixed-use place where people can live, work and play, says Sherman Chan, Vandyk's vice-president of acquisitions and developments.

A home in the Mimico sky

FIRST OF NINE TOWERS COMING TO A PLOT IN THE HEART OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

MATTHEW HAGUE

The lakefront neighbourhood of Mimico was established in the mid-1850s, when three large family farms taking up most of its area were subdivided for housing.

While Toronto has grown up around it, the pocket has maintained much of its old-town quaintness. Its homes tend to be one- and two-storey red bricks fronted by white-railed verandas and wide lawns. The main retail street, Lake Shore Boulevard, is lined with mom-and-pop shops old and new. Birds & Beans Coffee brews eco-grown java; Aquarium Flowers sells fresh-cut and potted blooms.

But a swatch of the village is poised for a major change. In the coming years, Toronto

single-storey factories are hemmed in by rail tracks, Royal York Road and Portland Street. The first phase, called the Buckingham, will consist of 724 condo units and 50,000-square feet of retail and offices.

The change has been a long time coming. In 2006, the city started studying plans for densifying the Mimico Triangle, holding community meetings and designs consultations. A few years later, city council deemed the Mimico Triangle a priority regeneration area, rezoning it for mid-rise buildings. In 2011, a developer called Stanton Renaissance launched sales for a 240-unit building at the Buckingham site. But by 2017, the company had gone bankrupt. After the development stalled, leaving more than 200 condo buyers out of luck — they recovered their deposits but lost footing in the market

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1. The menu at FBI Pizza, a popular takeout joint, has traditional, Neapolitan-style margaritas and diavolas, along with playful twists like the Leaning Tower of Pi, a stack of garlic bread topped with fior di latte and served with tomato sauce and fresh oregano. 2336 Lake Shore Blvd. W.

already been acquiring land in the Mimico Triangle.

"We were attracted because there were a lot of capital improvements happening in the area," says Sherman Chan, Vandyk's

2. Great Lakes Brewery has a roster of more than 16 handcrafted beers. Flavours are bold and bright, such as Citradiction, a mix of lemon, orange and tropical fruits, and Tango, a tart, smooth wheat ale. 30 Queen Elizabeth Blvd.

parking and doubling the frequency of trains from every 30 minutes to every 15. Metrolinx has since partnered with Vandyk, and will put the station in the base of the Buckingham.

3. Although the focus is sailing, no boat is required to join the Mimico Cruising Club. Initiation fees start at \$43, and benefits include access to its private waterfront dining room. 200 Humber Bay Park Rd W.

ate. It's a seven-minute Go Train ride to Union Station. Density works next to mass transit, especially if the trains are running every 15 minutes."

Vandyk appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, receiving approval from the provincial body in 2019.

As for their vision of what the Mimico Triangle could be, Chan looks to another revitalization project in Toronto: Liberty Village.

"I see a lot of parallels," he says. "Both are on 55-acre triangles of old industrial land next to Go Stations. Like Liberty Village, our intention is to create a vibrant, mixed-use place where people can live, work and play."

As part of the retail mix at the Buckingham, Chan hopes the anchor tenant will be a big grocery store, complemented by independent shops of the sort that Mimi-

fect, Andrew Muffitt, partner at Kohn Partnership Architects, note Liberty Village isn't perfect. One of its drawbacks, Muffitt says, is, "the massing of the buildings can be heavy at times. Our podiums will have a more sensitive (relationship) in scale to the surrounding low-rise structures, (and) the towers will be better massed to cast less shadows."

Another issue: Liberty Village was mainly developed for young singles, with a large number of small condos not necessarily conducive to growing families.

"We've been talking a lot about this," says Chan. "And it's very important for us to have a range of suite sizes, including larger units for young professionals, empty nesters, downsizers. We're essentially building a whole new neighbourhood from

development firm Vandyk is planning to build nine towers spread over a 55 acre (22 hectare) wedge of land called the Mimico Triangle. The patch is Mimico's former industrial heart, where

as values rose during the years they spent waiting — Vandyk stepped in and bought the property, including a half-finished parking garage that will soon be removed.

At the time, Vandyk had

vice-president of acquisitions and developments.

The city had added five acres (two hectares) of new park space. Metrolinx was planning to expand the Go Station, increasing the

Vandyk, however, wanted more storeys than the city had zoned for the area.

"Tall towers don't always make sense," says Chan. "Here, though, we thought the density was appropri-

ate for the area."

"There's potential for a café to spill out onto a nearby park," he says. "We're trying to envision all the things people will need."

Both Chan and his archi-

tect is known for. scratch. We want to welcome everyone."

Prices to be announced. For more information about 23 Buckingham Street, visit vandyk.com.

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