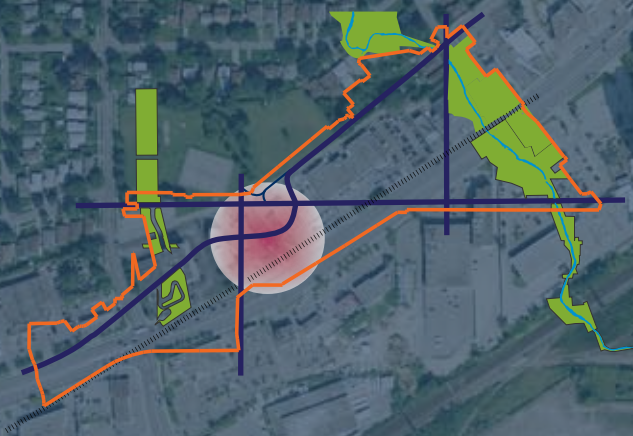


# Etobicoke Centre Public Space & Streetscape Plan

Final Report

October, 2011



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# Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	History & Context	5
3.0	Assessing the Centre	17
4.0	Guiding Principles and Themes	35
5.0	Framework Components	38
6.0	The Concept Plan	40
7.0	Key Strategies for Improving the Public Realm and Streetscape	42
8.0	Character Area Opportunities	64
9.0	Implementation	95
10.0	Appendices	99

# Key Maps

Map 1	Recent Development and Planning Initiatives: 2011 and Beyond	13	Map 19	Existing and Possible Pedestrian Environment Conditions	44
Map 2	Figure Ground Illustration of Etobicoke Centre Today	14	Map 20	Possible New Streets, Lanes, and Crossing Improvements	45
Map 3	Figure Ground Imagining the Future of Etobicoke Centre	15	Map 21	Entryway Treatments	46
Map 4	Assessing the Centre	17	Map 22	Existing and Potential Public Art Sites	47
Map 5	Public Land Ownership	19	Map 23	Existing and Proposed Bicycle Network	48
Map 6	Open Spaces	21	Map 24	Existing and Future Publicly Accessible Open Space	49
Map 7	Existing Roadway Network	22	Map 25	Existing, Planned, and Future Open Spaces	50
Map 8	Existing Public Transportation Network	23	Map 26	Existing and Future Open Space Areas	51
Map 9	Important Off-Road Pedestrian Paths	24	Map 27	Proposed Tree Planting Strategy	52
Map 10	Surface Parking and Roadways	25	Map 28	Proposed Boulevard Paving Strategy	54
Map 11	Boulevard Width Assessment	26	Map 29	Proposed Lighting Strategy	58
Map 12	Existing Cycling Routes	27	Map 30	Proposed Tree Ring Locations	60
Map 13	Existing Public Art	29	Map 31	Etobicoke Centre Character Areas	64
Map 14	Existing Pavement Treatments	30	Map 32	Dundas Street Wet Character Area	65
Map 15	Existing Lighting Treatments	32	Map 33	Kipling Mobility Character Area	69
Map 16	Existing Utilities	34	Map 35	Westwood / Civic District Character Area	74
Map 17	Etobicoke Centre Framework Plan	40	Map 36	Islington Village Character Area	88
Map 18	Tree Planting Opportunities	43	Map 37	Bloor-Islington Character Area	90





Mabelle community (mabellearts.ca)



Islington Village



Montgomery's Inn



Tom Riley Park



Aukland Road Hydro Corridor



Westwood Theatre



Viking Park

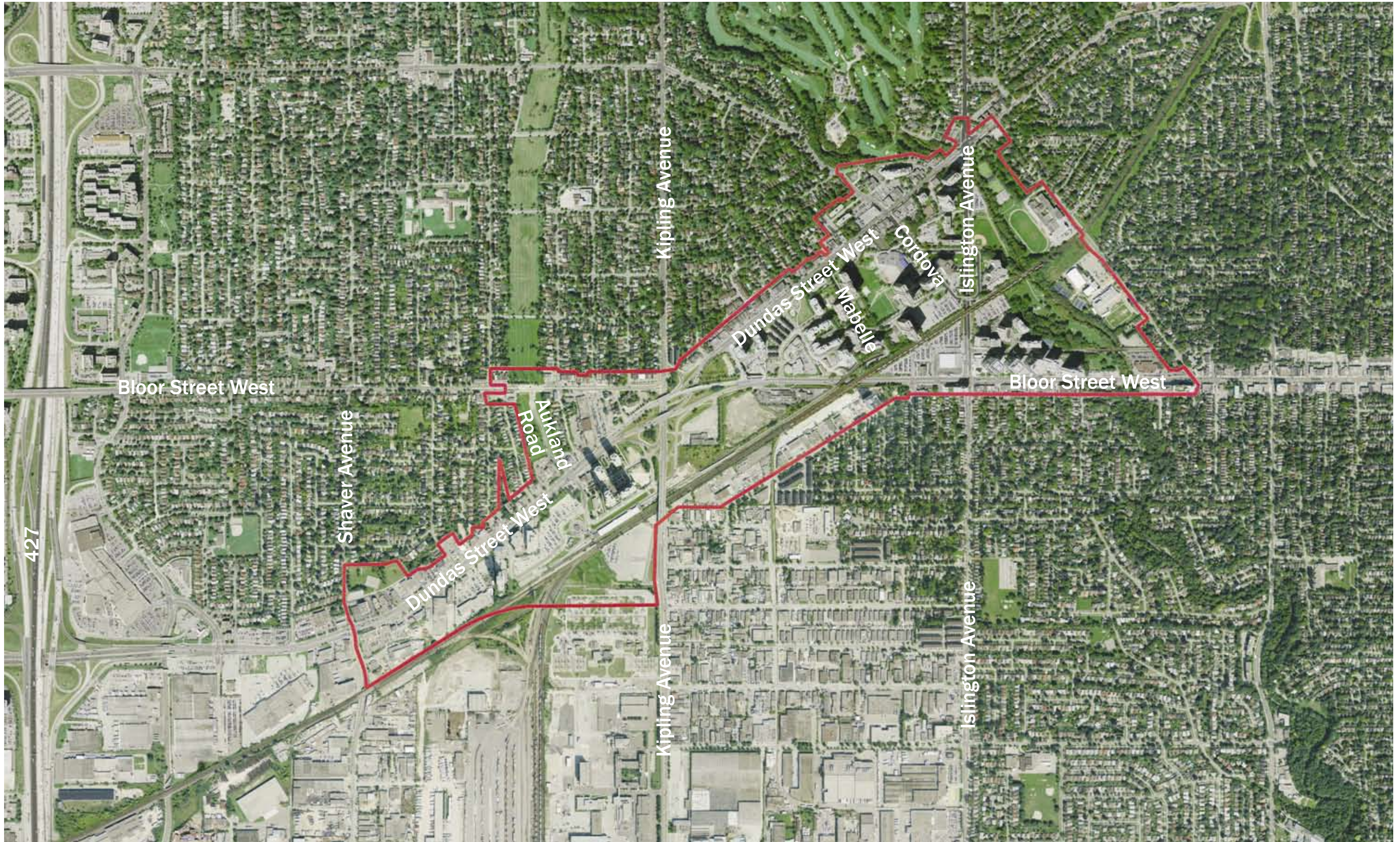


Kipling Subway Station



View of Etobicoke Centre looking East (www.urbantoronto.ca)

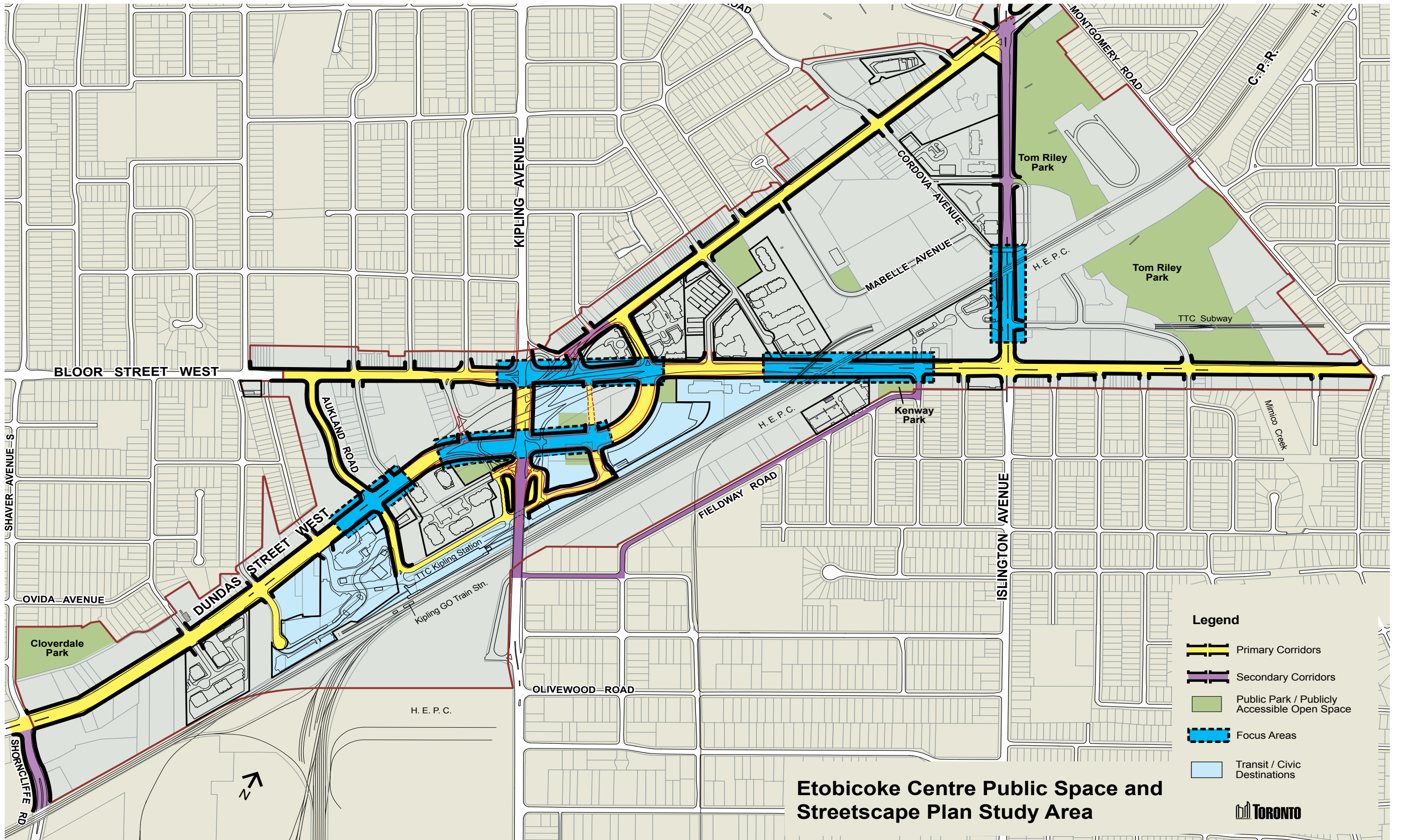




— Study Area / Etobicoke Centre Boundary







Study Area: This Plan focuses on strategies to improve the Focus Areas (Blue) and Primary Corridors (Yellow), as well as a number of other public spaces throughout the Centre.



# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Etobicoke Centre Public Space & Streetscape Plan

### “ Etobicoke Centre is envisioned as...

*A mixed-use urban focal point for the western part of the City of Toronto with a close-knit urban fabric. It will be defined by a visually-stimulating, pedestrian-friendly environment that achieves unity amid diversity.”*

- ETOBICOKE CENTRE SECONDARY PLAN

#### What is it?

The Etobicoke Centre Public Space & Streetscape Plan recommends strategies and projects to improve the public realm in this emerging urban centre.

Through these recommendations, the Plan aims to:

- Unify the diverse parts of the Centre;
- Encourage a pedestrian friendly environment;
- Improve sidewalk details and lighting conditions;
- Identify new park space and public space improvements.

#### Why is it important?

New developments and initiatives are rapidly changing Etobicoke Centre, an Official Plan designated Centre, but there is no coherent vision for what the Centre’s public realm should look and feel like. Today, the public realm has strengths and weaknesses, but generally does not reflect the area’s status as a “Centre.” This Plan will present an exciting yet practical framework to unify the Centre, celebrate its unique and diverse areas, help guide redevelopment projects, and identify future capital projects. As the Centre continues to evolve, this Plan will allow the City to get ahead of change and ensure that new development helps achieve the vision set out for the area.

#### Who is it for?

This Plan is for several audiences, including:

- Land owners and developers looking to understand what is expected from them when they come forward with a project;
- City staff reviewing development applications and planning future improvements;
- The general public seeking to understand the vision for the area.





experience



recreation



community



identity



mobility



relaxation



## 1.2 What is a City Centre?

A Centre is a **people place**, one that embodies and celebrates civic identity and presents the face of the city to the world. It boasts a range of public spaces in which people can relax, celebrate, play, and interact with each other.

A Centre is a **hub of mobility**, anchored by major public transit facilities that help people move into and out of the area, and defined by a high quality pedestrian realm that makes walking easy and enjoyable.

Finally, a Centre is a mixed-use, animated and desirable place for people live, work, and play.





1950's



1980's

— Etobicoke Centre Boundary



# 2.0 History & Context

## 2.1 History

Just over a hundred years ago, the area now called Etobicoke Centre was made up of a collection of small villages, including Summerville, Eatonville, and Islington Village. The area was characterized by agriculture and railway infrastructure, and did not experience substantial growth until after the end of the first World War.

In the 1960's, as Toronto and its surrounding municipalities expanded, the area grew as a suburb. New development and infrastructure came to dominate the area, such as the Six Points Interchange “Spaghetti Intersection” and the wide arterial roads that have shaped the built environment since. Plans to remove the interchange have been discussed almost as long as it has been in place, as have visions to re-imagine the lands within it.

Beyond Montgomery's Inn, an important community meeting place dating back to 1830, there are few remaining heritage structures (listed below) in the Centre. Though not architecturally remarkable, the former Westwood Theatre (1952) represents the evolution and suburbanization of Etobicoke, and its iconic sign remains a landmark.

In recent history, the area has continued to change, accommodating new high- and mid-rise condominiums and a growing population.

### Heritage Listed Buildings in Etobicoke Centre:

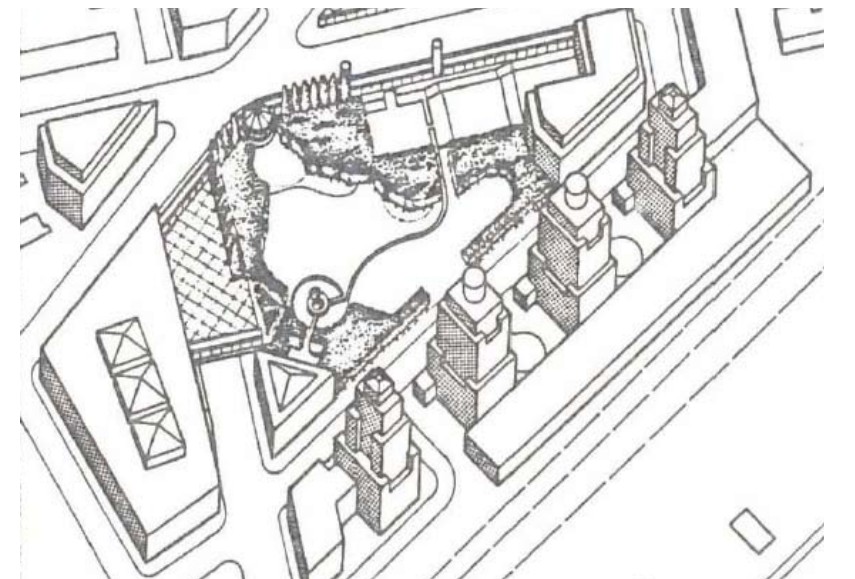
- **4886-4888 Dundas Street West**
- **4946 Dundas Street West**
- **3904 Bloor Street West**
- **4709 Dundas Street West**
- **86 Montgomery Road**



Railway near present day Islington and Bloor, April 4, 1954  
Source: Montgomery's Inn Box 1 008.136



Original Poster for Westwood Theatre opening  
Source: <http://silentscreen.com/?p=1513>



1980's Vision for Etobicoke Centre  
Source: City of Toronto, Kipling / Islington Secondary Plan, 1988

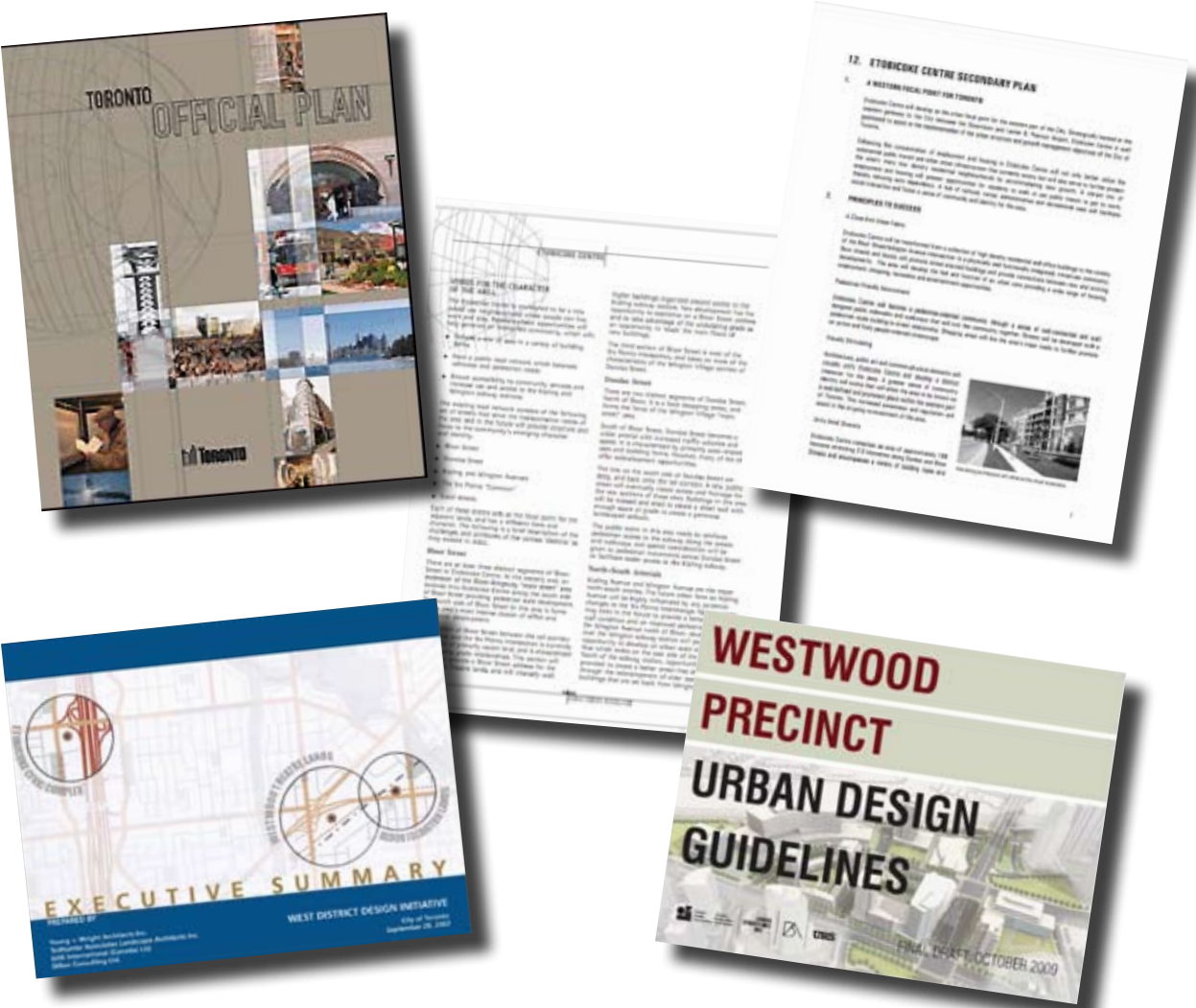


# 2.2 Background Document and Current Initiatives Review & Analysis

The recent and ongoing transformation of Etobicoke Centre has been shaped by a number of public and private initiatives.

The current planning and policy context for Etobicoke Centre tells a story of an area undergoing significant change. The following documents and initiatives reflect the amount of development activity and investment that has already begun to transform Etobicoke Centre.

- Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan, Zoning By-Law and Urban Design Guidelines
- Six Points Interchange Reconfiguration Class Environmental Assessment Study
- West District Design Initiative
- Westwood Precinct Urban Design Guidelines
- Kipling Mobility Hub
- Islington Village BIA Streetscape Improvement Plans
- MabelleARTS A Park of Many Paths
- Ongoing Development and Infrastructure Improvements





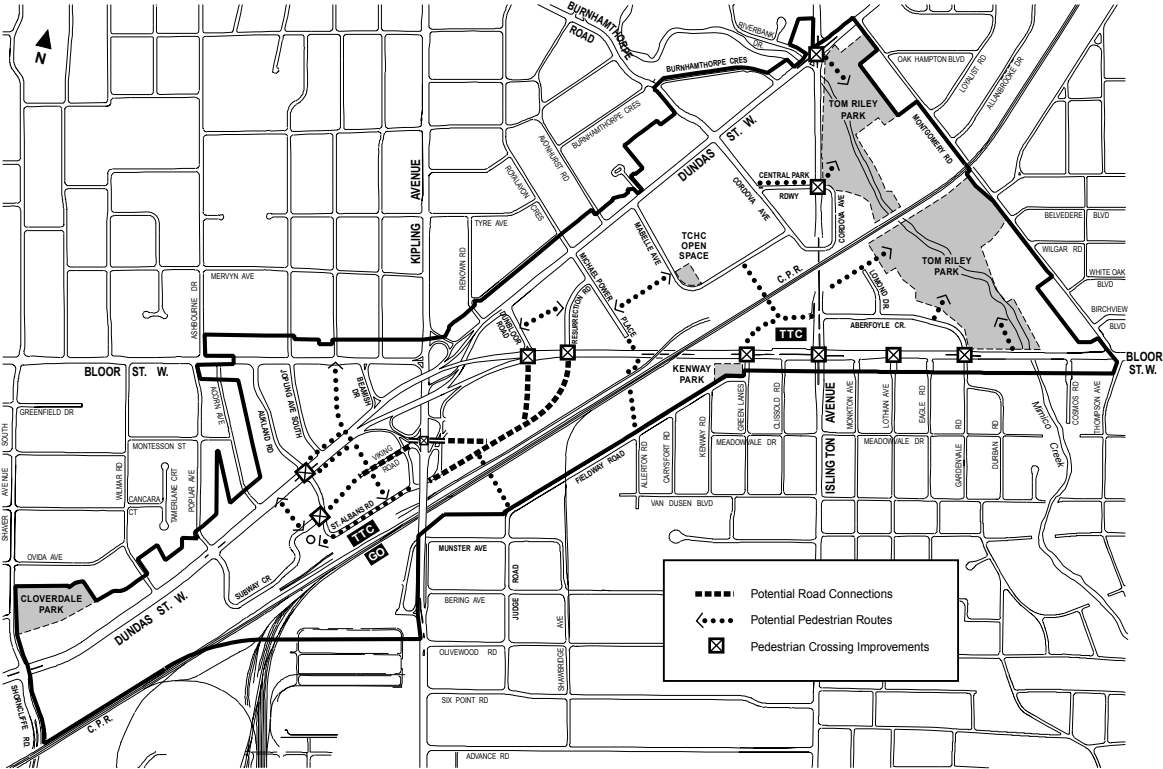
## 2.2.1 Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan, Urban Design Guidelines, and Zoning By-Law

In 2002, the Etobicoke Centre Secondary Plan and Zoning By-Law laid a foundation encouraging the intensification and urbanization of Etobicoke Centre, and recent development activity is a healthy result of these policies. The Secondary Plan and Zoning By-law permit densities ranging from 2.0 times the lot area in the lowest density areas to 3.5 along the major arterial corridors to 5.0 at major transit stations. These densities are supportive of the pedestrian-oriented, transit supportive mixed-use community envisaged for the Centre. The Zoning By-Law also permits heights ranging from 15 metres in heritage areas to 24 metres fronting major corridors to 90 metres at transit stations.

Otherwise, the Secondary Plan and Zoning By-Law generally permit a diverse range of uses while forbidding those that are not conducive a pedestrian-oriented environment, such as drive-through facilities. The requirement that all development respect a 0.0 to 3.0 metre setback encourages a generous pedestrian realm, although this report recommends increasing the setback to a minimum of 3.0 metres on Dundas Street West (west of Kipling) to ensure adequate space for pedestrians, cyclists, and streetscaping.

Finally, the Secondary Plan proposes a number of

Potential Road Infrastructure Improvements and Linkages and Connections Opportunities, including proposed new roads and pedestrian connections. This Plan generally supports these proposed connections - several of which are already underway or built - and recommends minor changes to better align connections with existing destinations and desire lines.



Linkages and Connections Opportunities

**SCHEDULE B**  
Etobicoke Centre  
Secondary Plan





WDDI Bloor-Islington Lands Development Concept

## 2.2.2 Six Points Reconfiguration

The City of Toronto undertook an environmental assessment study to examine alternative configurations of the current “spaghetti interchange” at the intersection of Kipling Avenue, Dundas Street West and Bloor Street. The purpose of the study was to identify configurations that could maintain the existing movements, simplify way-finding, eliminate elevated flyovers, support a more balanced transportation system, free large land parcels for redevelopment, and better connect neighbourhoods. The study identified the “Fully At-Grade, Dundas Street Loop” as the preferred alternative. This Plan endorses this configuration and accepts it as the base condition for its recommendations.

## 2.2.3 West District Design Initiative (WDDI)

The West District Design Initiative (WDDI) reviewed and produced urban design visions for three sites in Etobicoke: the Etobicoke Civic Centre, the Bloor-Islington Lands, and the Westwood Theatre Lands. The Etobicoke Civic Centre is outside this Plan’s study area, and the Westwood Theatre Lands have since been the subject of further study, but the recommendations for the Bloor-Islington Lands are still relevant.

The WDDI preferred design option for Bloor-Islington proposes: redeveloping the site with a number of mid- to high-rise developments, planning a double row of trees along Bloor and Islington, creating a new street running parallel to Bloor north and west of the site, and developing a mid-block public plaza on the north side of Bloor Street. This Plan generally endorses these recommendations, but further proposes adding a pedestrian connection over the rail corridor to connect to the Mabelle-Cordova neighbourhood, requiring a large setback on Bloor and Islington to produce a more generous pedestrian realm, and, depending on the nature of the redevelopment of the site, relocating the proposed public plaza to the north west corner of Bloor and Islington.





WDDI Westwood Civic Centre Site Development Concept



Westwood Civic Centre Development Concept with Courthouse



Updated Westwood Civic Centre Development Concept without Courthouse

## 2.2.4 Westwood Precinct Urban Design Guidelines

The Westwood Precinct Urban Design Guidelines were produced to provide a development framework for the Westwood Precinct after the Province of Ontario selected these lands as the site for a future provincial courthouse. The guidelines updated the WDDI recommendations to reflect the security needs of the courthouse. The courthouse has since been cancelled, and as a result this Plan updates the recommendations for the Westwood Precinct to reflect this change and to better connect it to the rest of the Centre.

### Updated Recommendations for Westwood Precinct

1. Depending on land use, retain north-south 'Street B' as per WDDI. For residential development, the Mid-Block connection should remain as a street and/ or pedestrian connection
2. Elimination of Courthouse security setback on the south side of Dundas Street West, to be replaced with a curb-to-building face setback of 12 metres along both sides of Dundas to allow for a double row of trees and an on-boulevard bicycle lane, a new bike lane standard.
3. Elimination of Courthouse Square
4. Restoration of 'Street C' as per WDDI





### 2.2.5 Kipling Mobility Hub

Metrolinx has proposed to develop a Mobility Hub on the current site of Kipling subway station, a project that will relocate the majority of bus traffic from Islington Subway station and collect TTC, GO, and Mississauga Transit in a single facility. This development will have a positive impact on the Centre by freeing up the lands surrounding Islington station for redevelopment and concentrating major mobility activity in one location. It will also create a significant meeting place, help define the Centre as an important urban node, and will ensure sustained growth and improved travel. The project is currently on hold, which may result in design modifications, but, for the purpose of this plan, the most recent design is reflected.

Local Road Infrastructure - Bloor-Islington Bridge Rehabilitation (Completed)	\$1 million
Tom Riley Park North Tennis Court	\$251,900
TTC Kipling Interregional Bus Terminal	\$8 million
TTC Kipling Station – (East Entrance and Passenger Pick-up and Drop-Off)	\$12 million
TTC Islington Station (TTC 10 Year Capital Forecast)	\$53 million
Redevelop Six Points Interchange (City of Toronto 10 Year Capital Plan)	\$42 million

### 2.2.6 10-Year Capital Plan

The 2010 capital budget and 10-year Capital Plan identifies a number of projects that will impact the streetscape and public realm in Etobicoke Centre. Included in the Capital Plan are finances related to funding agreements with the Province of Ontario (under the Recreational Infrastructure and Canada Program in Ontario and the Ontario Recreation Program, or RInC-REC) and the Government of Canada (for projects approved under the infrastructure stimulus fund, or ISF), as well as a number of City-funded projects.

Relevant projects included in the Plan include: improvements to the Tom Riley Park North Tennis Court, the Bloor-Islington Bridge Rehabilitation, the Inter-Regional bus terminal as part of the Mobility Hub at Kipling Station, and the redevelopment of the Six Points Interchange and access to Kipling Subway station. The development of the inter-regional bus terminal and the redevelopment of the Six Points Interchange are crucial to the future of Etobicoke Centre, and should remain priorities within the Capital Plan.



2.2.7 Other Initiatives

Islington Village BIA Streetscape Improvement Plans

The Islington Village BIA has undertaken two streetscape studies to propose improvements to the conditions along Dundas Street West, east of Kipling. These reports recommend improving sidewalk infrastructure, marking the entryways into the BIA area, de-cluttering street furniture, and minimizing the impact of parking on the pedestrian realm. Many of these recommendations are echoed in the Concept Plan and Key Strategies (See Chapters 6.0 and 7.0).



Mabelle Arts - A Park of Many Paths

A Park of Many Paths is a Mabelle Arts-lead initiative revolving around transforming Mabelle Park through the action of local residents, artists, and a number of other organizations. The designs proposed in these plans are unique, creative, and reflect the diverse backgrounds and experiences of the community. Priority projects identified by Mabelle Arts include providing lighting, improving pedestrian paths, and improving site lines and safety around vehicular traffic. This Plan endorses these projects and recommends working collaboratively with the Mabelle community in implementing its visions for the space.



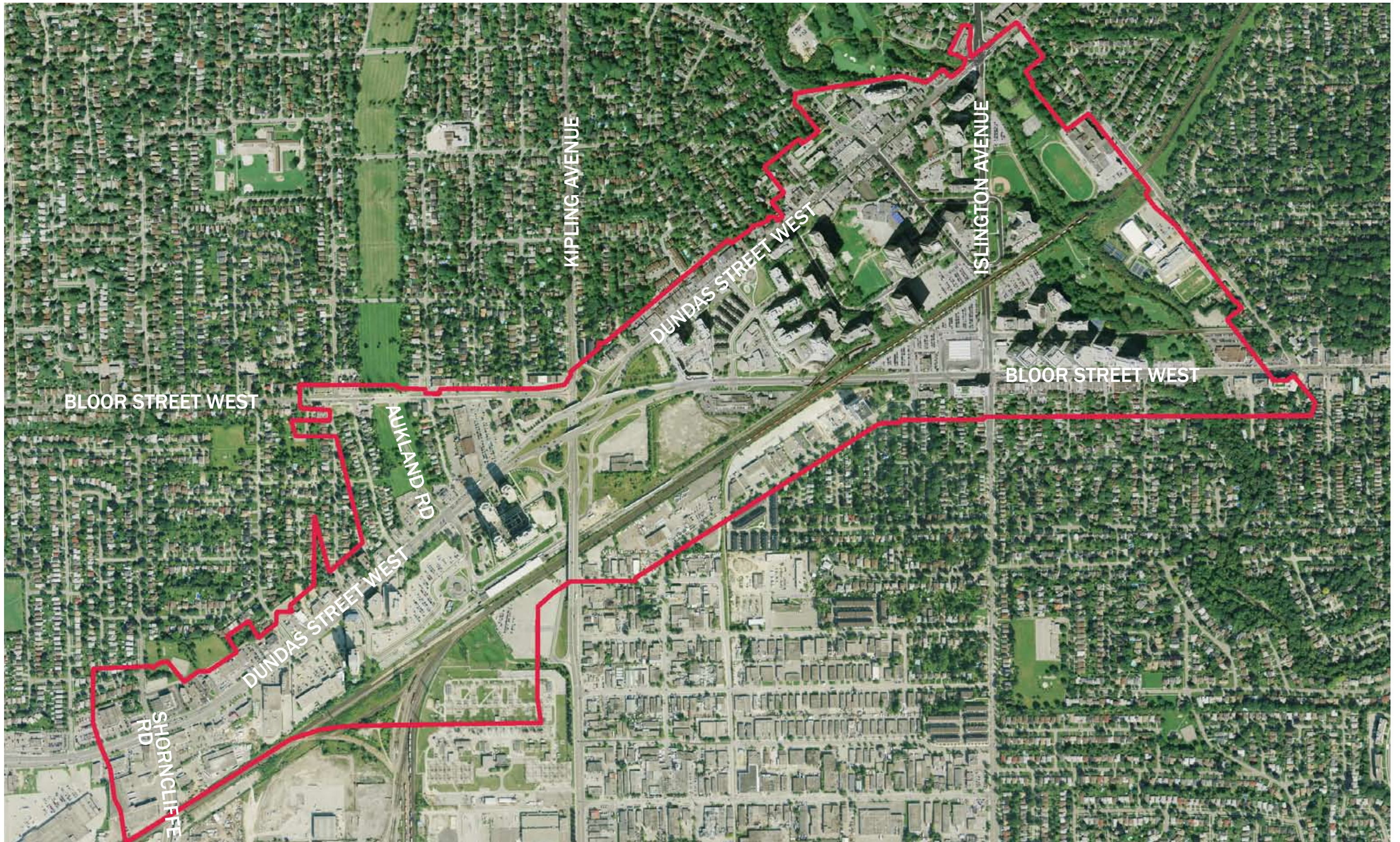
A Park of Many Paths: [www.mabellearts.ca](http://www.mabellearts.ca)

Ongoing Development and Infrastructure

Improvements

A number of development proposals have been submitted to or approved by the City in recent years, which embody and support the principles prescribed by the Secondary Plan. Recent work to improve the conditions of the Bloor Street Underpass began in late 2010.





— Study Area / Etobicoke Centre Boundary





# 2.3 The Centre is Changing

Michael Power Park

Recent development along Dundas Street West, east of Kipling

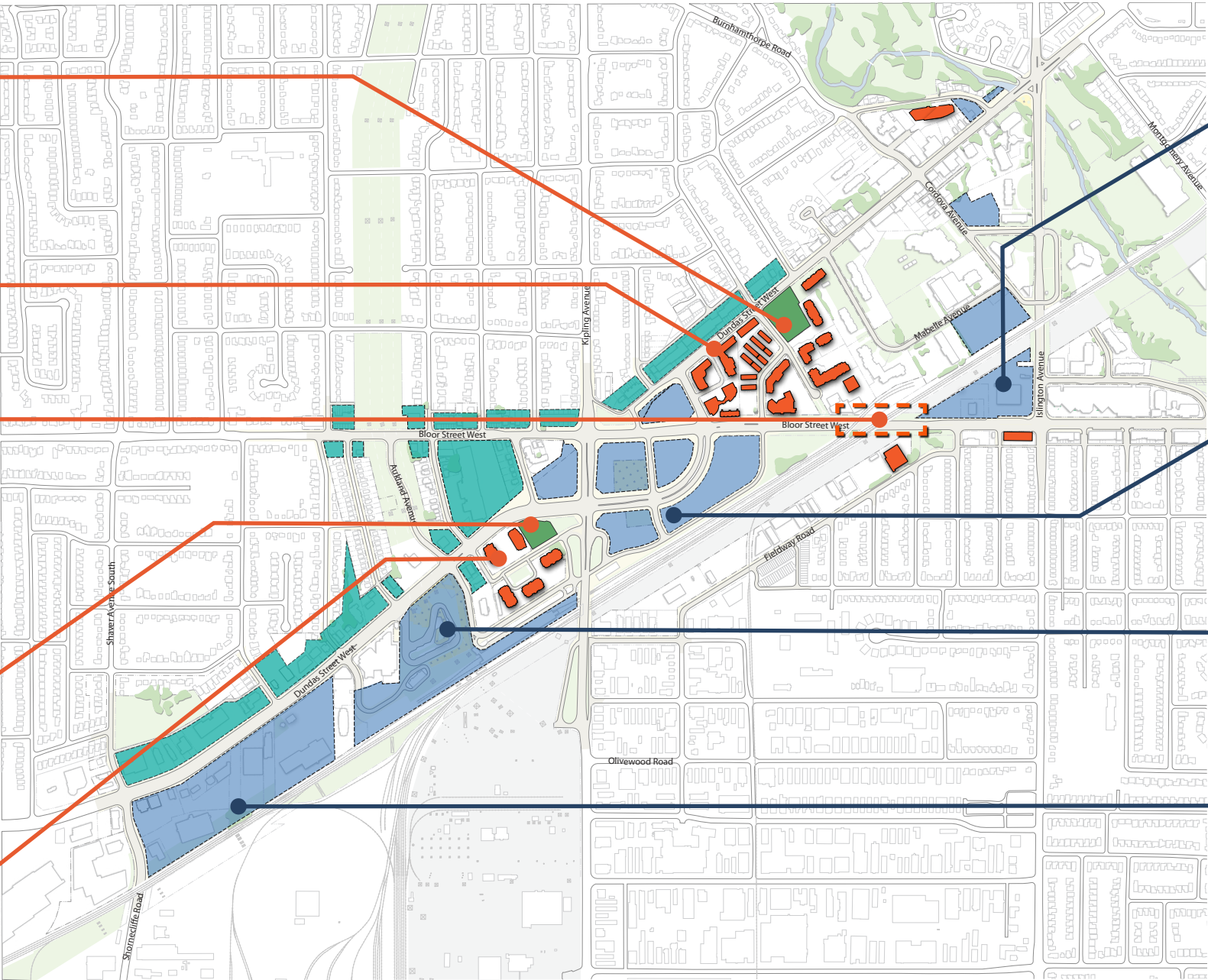
Bloor Street underpass improvements

Viking Park, Phase 1

Recent development along Dundas St. West.

**RECENT & CURRENT DEVELOPMENT**

Since the Secondary Plan was adopted in 2002, over 3,600 residential units and 5,650 square metres of non-residential developments have been proposed, approved or built. So far the implementation of the Secondary Plan has been successful in positively transforming the area. In addition, a number of planned and future initiatives are underway that will continue to implement the vision for Etobicoke Centre.



Map 1: Recent development and planned initiatives: 2011 and beyond

- Recent & Current Developments
- Planned & Future Initiatives
- Area of potential long-term change



Islington Subway Site at Islington Ave. & Bloor Street, after completion of Kipling Mobility Hub



Westwood Theatre lands and Six Points Reconfiguration



Kipling Mobility Hub redevelopment by Metrolinx



Dundas Street West redevelopment proposal

## PLANNED & FUTURE INITIATIVES



### 2.3.1 The Centre Today

Today, a healthy level of development interest and activity characterizes Etobicoke Centre, resulting in a number of recently built and under construction projects. The product of this activity is that the Centre is very much in a process of transition: urban qualities such as higher densities and strong streetwalls share space with suburban development patterns such as deep setbacks, large quantities of space dedicated to surface parking, and automobile oriented development.

The Centre’s most dominant feature remains the “spaghetti interchange” Six Points Interchange of Kipling Avenue, Dundas Street West, and Bloor Street West, which creates a void in the heart of the Centre and renders development activity in this area an impossibility.

Map 2 : Figure Ground Illustration of Etobicoke Centre Today





### 2.3.2 Imagining the Future

As the Centre continues to urbanize, the automobile-centric urban fabric will transition to a more intensified and pedestrian-oriented feel. There are already significant development applications submitted and approved for large swaths of Dundas Street West west of Kipling, all of which propose appropriate heights and densities. When combined, recent development activity and proposed redevelopments will have a net impact of “filling out” the Centre and transforming it into a mixed-use focal point for Western Toronto.

As the Six Points Interchange Reconfiguration moves ahead, the void in the Centre will be replaced by a mix of uses, public spaces, and improved mobility options that will create a true hub and meeting place.

Map 3: Figure Ground Imaging the Future of Etobicoke Centre

