

3.0 Assessing the Centre

Assessing the existing public realm and streetscape in Etobicoke Centre is crucial to identifying what works, what doesn't, and what can be improved. Through walking tours, multiple site visits, stakeholder interviews, and a large public open house, the study team conducted an extensive review of the Centre's public realm. The assessment assumes that major current initiatives, such as the Six Points Interchange Reconfiguration and the Kipling Mobility Hub, will proceed as planned, which have therefore been illustrated in all drawings.

Map 4: Assessing the Centre



The Centre has little cycling infrastructure



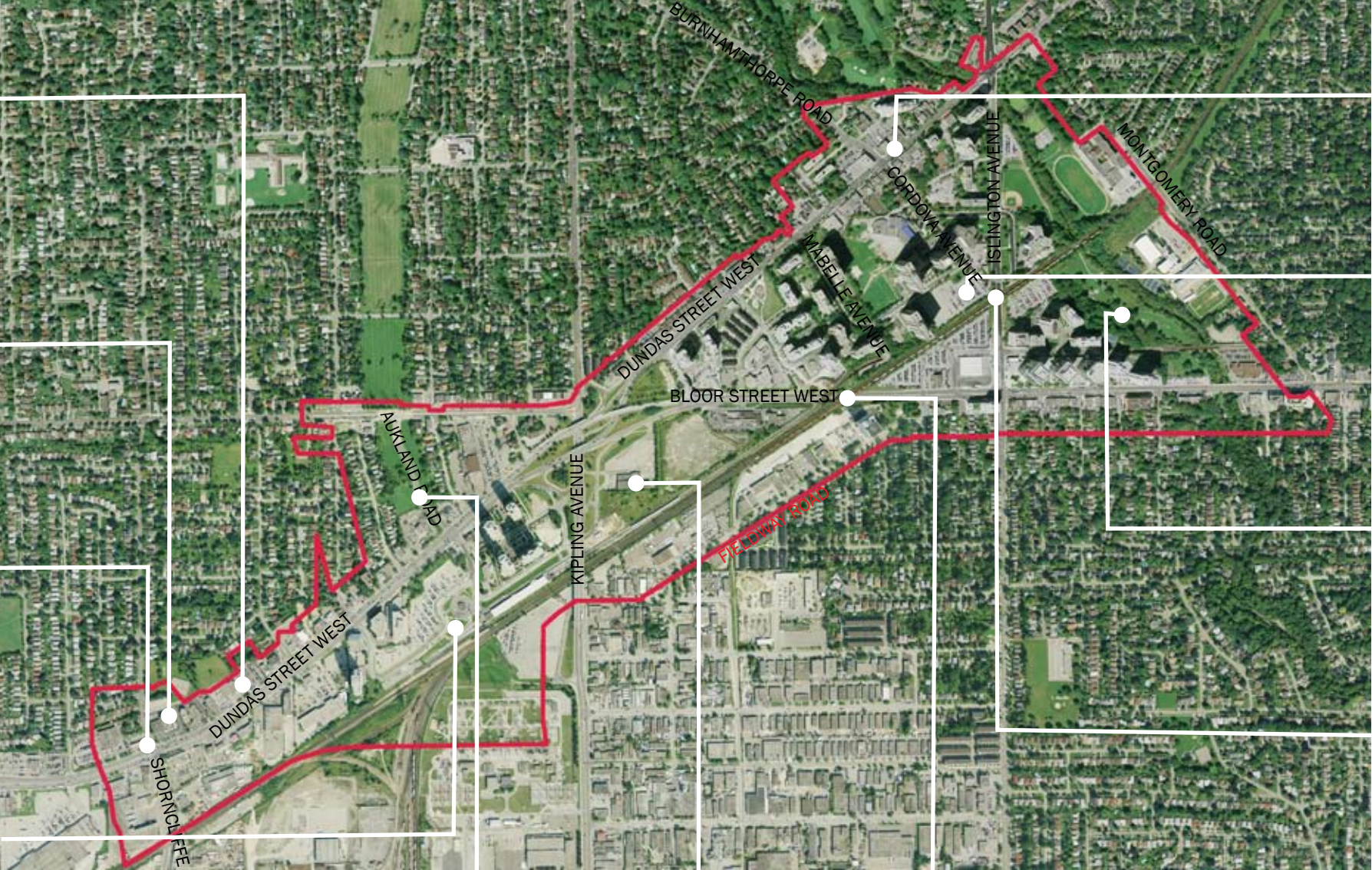
The Centre has very few trees



Most arterials are wide and car-centric



There is disparate street furniture



The Centre has some well-defined and desirable areas, and some with new landscape



The Centre is dominated by surface parking and paving;



Residents are generally provided with successful open spaces



Pedestrian connections are often unclear and uninviting



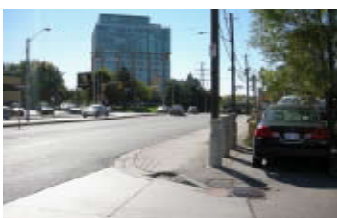
The Hydro Corridor has potential for facilitating connections and mobility



The Westwood Theatre lands will be redeveloped into a mixed use area



There are major infrastructure barriers



The Centre has generic lighting and sidewalk details

3.1 What We Heard

This Plan was informed by comments received from various area stakeholders, the City of Toronto’s Design Review Panel, and the general public. All those consulted spoke with pride about Etobicoke and excitement about its future, but they were also critical of the Centre’s current look and feel in the public realm.

Many comments spoke of the need for improved pedestrian infrastructure, a lack of unique or coherent identity, a desire for more public gathering spaces, and a wish to support more cultural activity and public art.

In addition to the general public, the following organizations and agencies provided input into shaping this Plan:

- City of Toronto staff and Ward Councillor
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Mabelle Arts
- Arts Etobicoke
- Metrolinx
- Mississauga Transit
- Islington Ratepayers Association
- Tridel / Essex Phase 1 Board
- Islington Village BIA

“We need more trees”

“Mabelle always gets lost in Etobicoke Centre”

“Traffic moves fast and the area is not pedestrian friendly”

“There is not much accommodation for seating and gathering”

“We need the whole road on Dundas near Auckland to turn buses”

“Dundas is just a higgledy piggledy mess”

“Mabelle Park needs lights”

“We want Mabelle to physically open up to the community”

“Our dream is that Mabelle Park becomes a cultural destination”

“Islington Village should be distinct from the rest of the centre”

“Make the streets easier to move around and gather in”

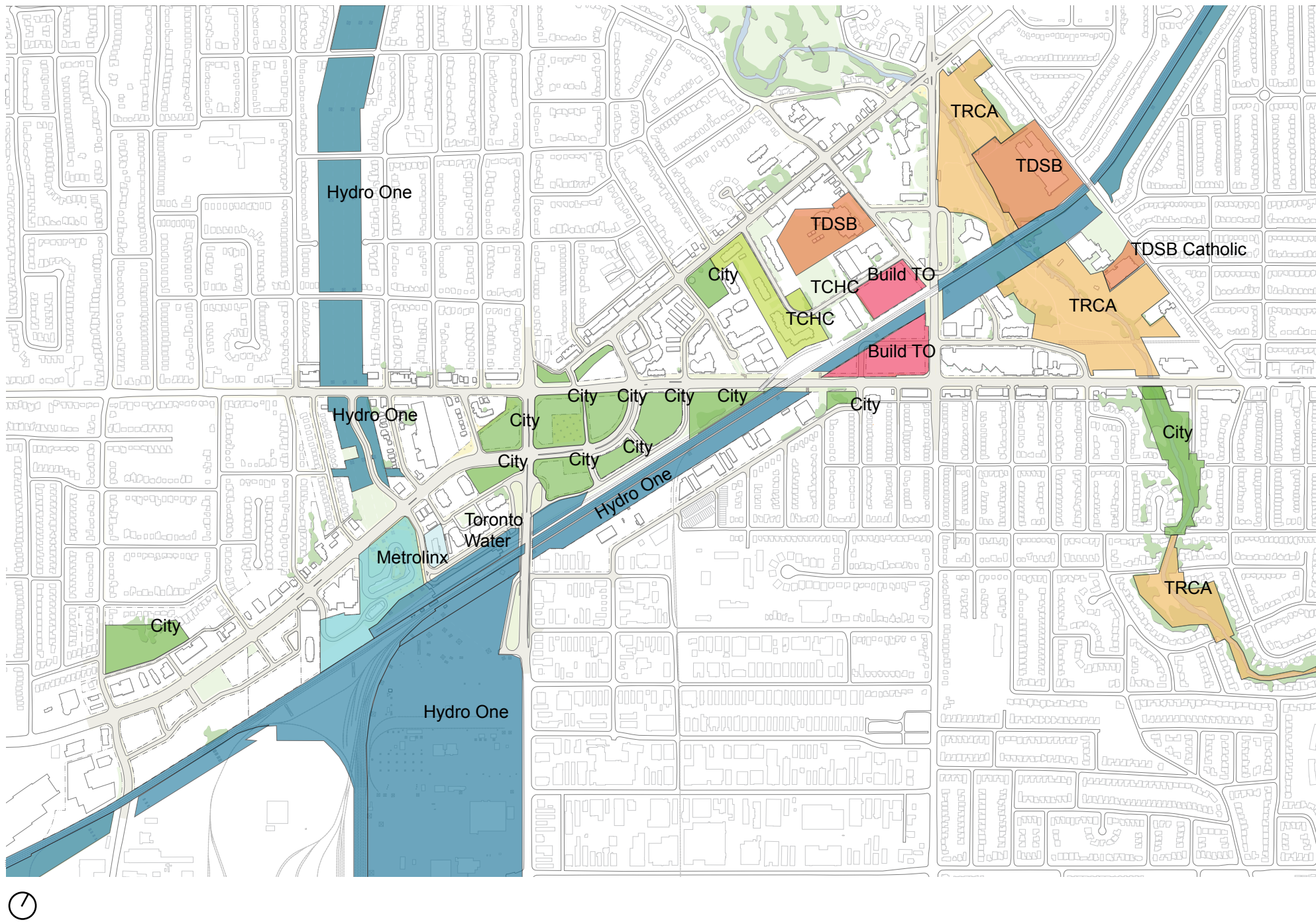
“There is a huge opportunity to tell a different story through art”

3.2 Public Ownership

A great deal of the land in Etobicoke Centre is in public ownership, including both major transit stations, the hydro corridors, a number of parks and natural areas, public housing, and the land in and surrounding the six points intersection.

Given the amount of land owned by public agencies, the City has a high degree of control over much of the Centre’s future development. It is important the City and other public bodies carefully and strategically manage the redevelopment of these lands to ensure that the future public realm is of a high quality and meets the needs of an urban centre.

Map 5: Public Land Ownership



3.3 Open Space

The Centre is currently well-served by a number of successful open spaces that support a variety of activities. The west end of the Centre contains Cloverdale Park, a large open space that encourages active recreational uses, and Viking Park, a new space built near Kipling subway station that contains interactive elements such as a water feature and mini-amphitheatre.

The middle of the Centre contains another mid-sized park in Michael Power Park, which supports both sports and spaces for gathering such as covered seating areas. Further east, Mabelle Park is a small but bustling community gathering space that has been shaped in part by the active and creative community that relies upon it.

Finally, in the east, Kenway Park offers a small green space for passive recreational activities, while Tom Riley Park, the largest in the Centre, connects to the ravine system and provides a natural escape in busy urban environment.

All of these parks are well-used, but some - such as Cloverdale and Kenway - could benefit from greater connections to their surroundings. Despite the many successes in Mabelle Park, basic park safety infrastructure, such as lighting, is missing.

Through facilitating better connections with the rest of the Centre and implementing some small but important changes, these open spaces will continue to contribute to the Centre's liveability.



Michael Power Park



Bridge at Tom Riley Park



Kenway Park



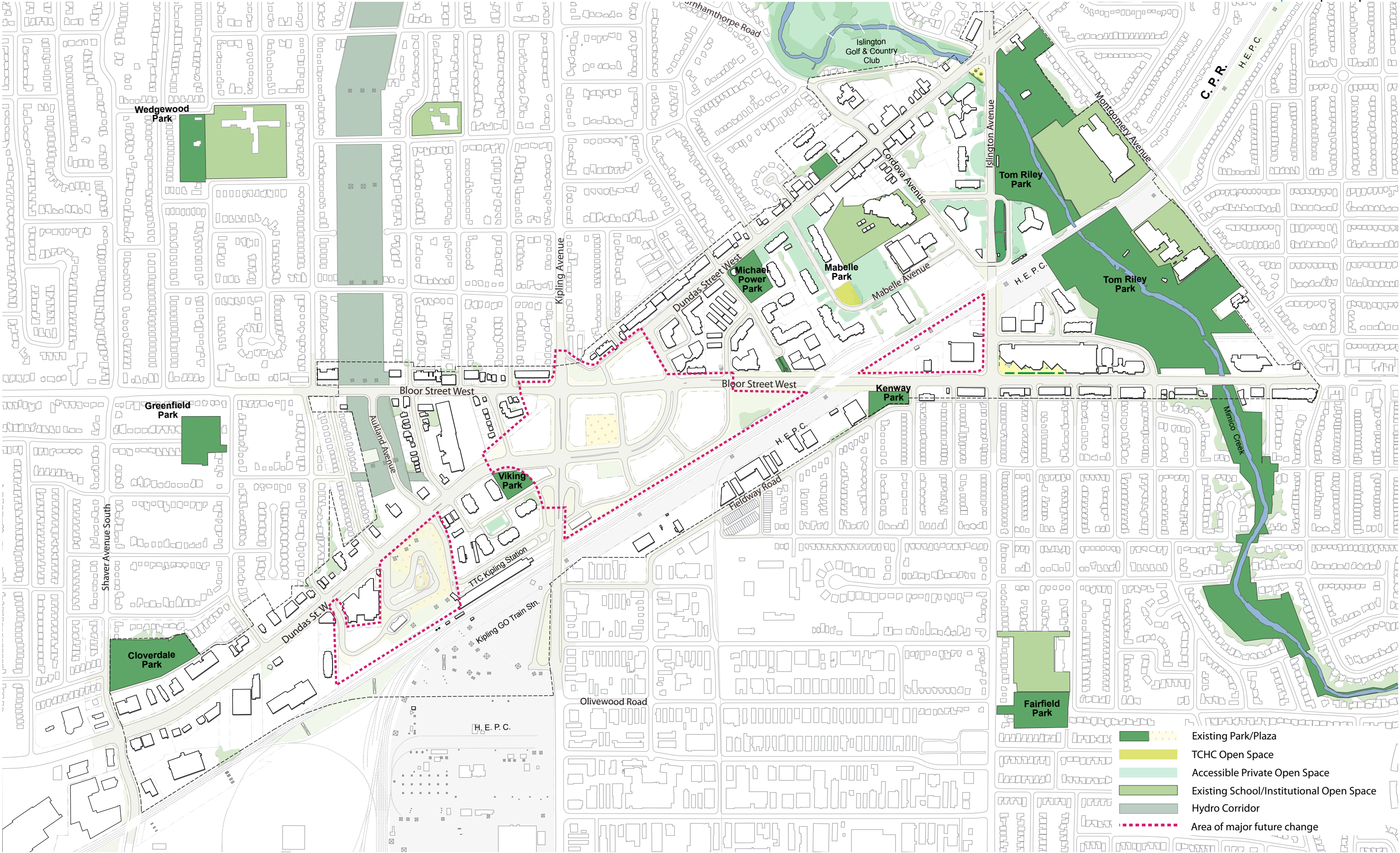
Viking Park



Mabelle Park (www.mabellearts.ca)



Cloverdale Park



3.4 Roadways

The Centre is dominated by wide roads and an automobile centric built form. The resulting environment is unpleasant, even hazardous for pedestrians, and contributes little to a sense of identity or place. Major transportation infrastructure, such as the railway corridor and the Six Points Interchange, creates substantial challenges for movement throughout the area, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Nevertheless, this road network is a crucial component of Etobicoke and western Toronto’s transportation system. Over 50,000 vehicles travel along Dundas Street West (west of Kipling) each day. The challenge will be to maintain the flow and movement of traffic throughout the Centre while creating a more balanced and safer environment for other modes of transportation.

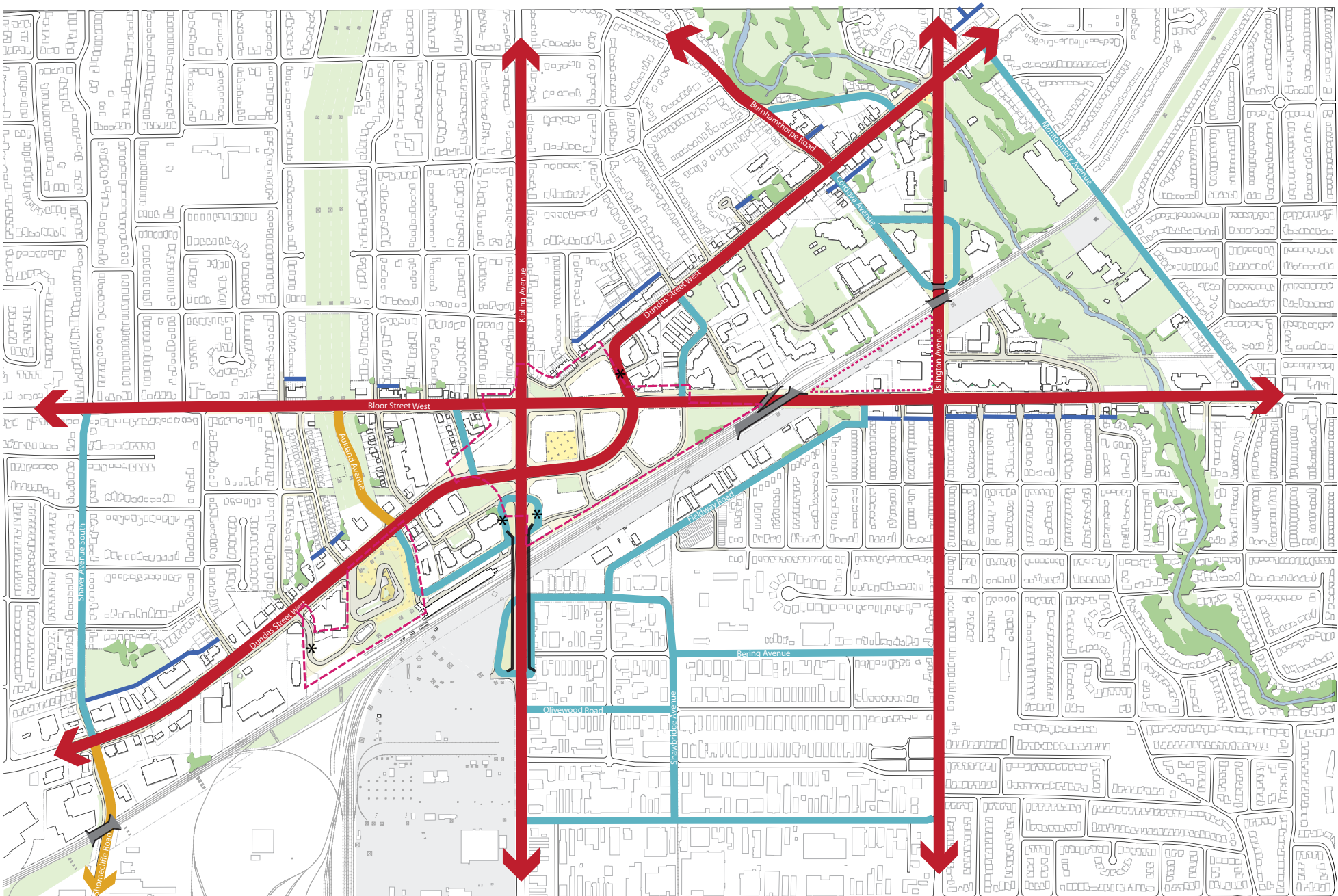


Traffic on Dundas Street West



The Six Points Interchange

Map 7: Existing Roadway Network



- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector Road
- Public Laneway
- Overpass
- Area of major future change

Notes:
When not indicated road is classified as Local
★ Indicates possible new road segment classification resulting from interchange reconstruction