

3.6 Pedestrian Environment

Outside of a few exceptions, such as Islington Village, the pedestrian environment in the Centre is quite poor. Sidewalks are narrow and, along Dundas Street West, perforated by multiple curb cuts that encourage pedestrian-vehicle conflicts. Pedestrians have clearly been an afterthought in the design of the public realm to date.

Streetscape design is also generally not of the quality expected in a Centre. There is little to identify the importance of the Centre or to distinguish it from other parts of the city. Finally, amenities such as lighting only serve automobiles, reflecting the lack of attention paid to pedestrian-focused infrastructure to date.

The walking experience is crucial to the success of a Centre. For Etobicoke Centre to become a true urban centre, improving the pedestrian environment must be a priority.

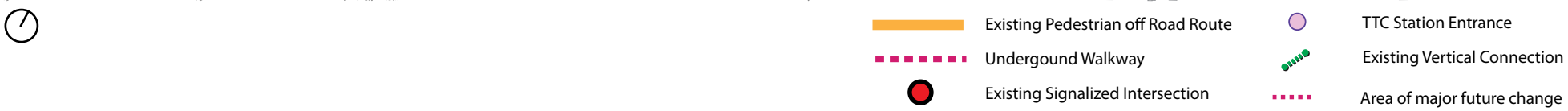
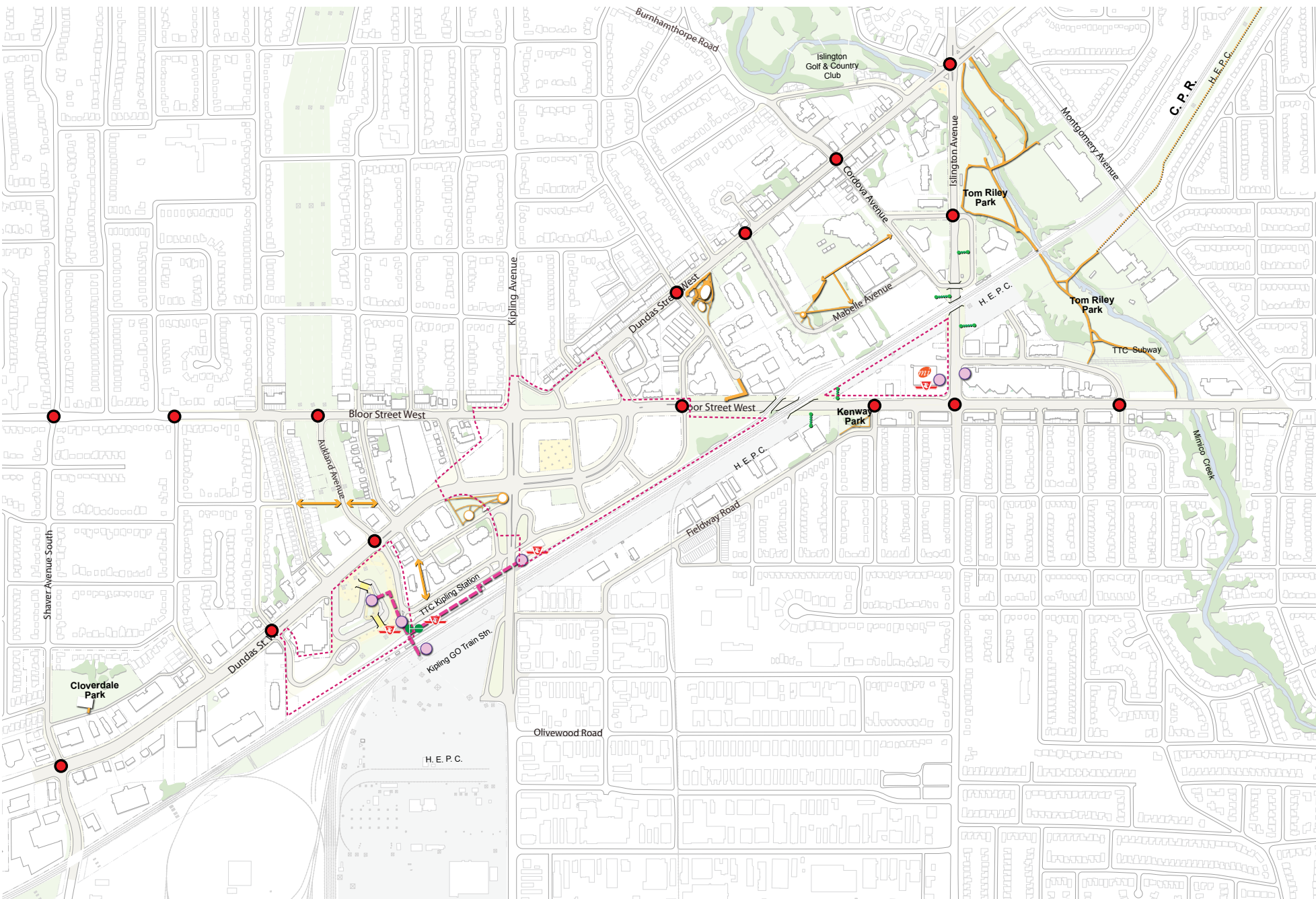


Narrow sidewalks with no buffer to the busy roadway

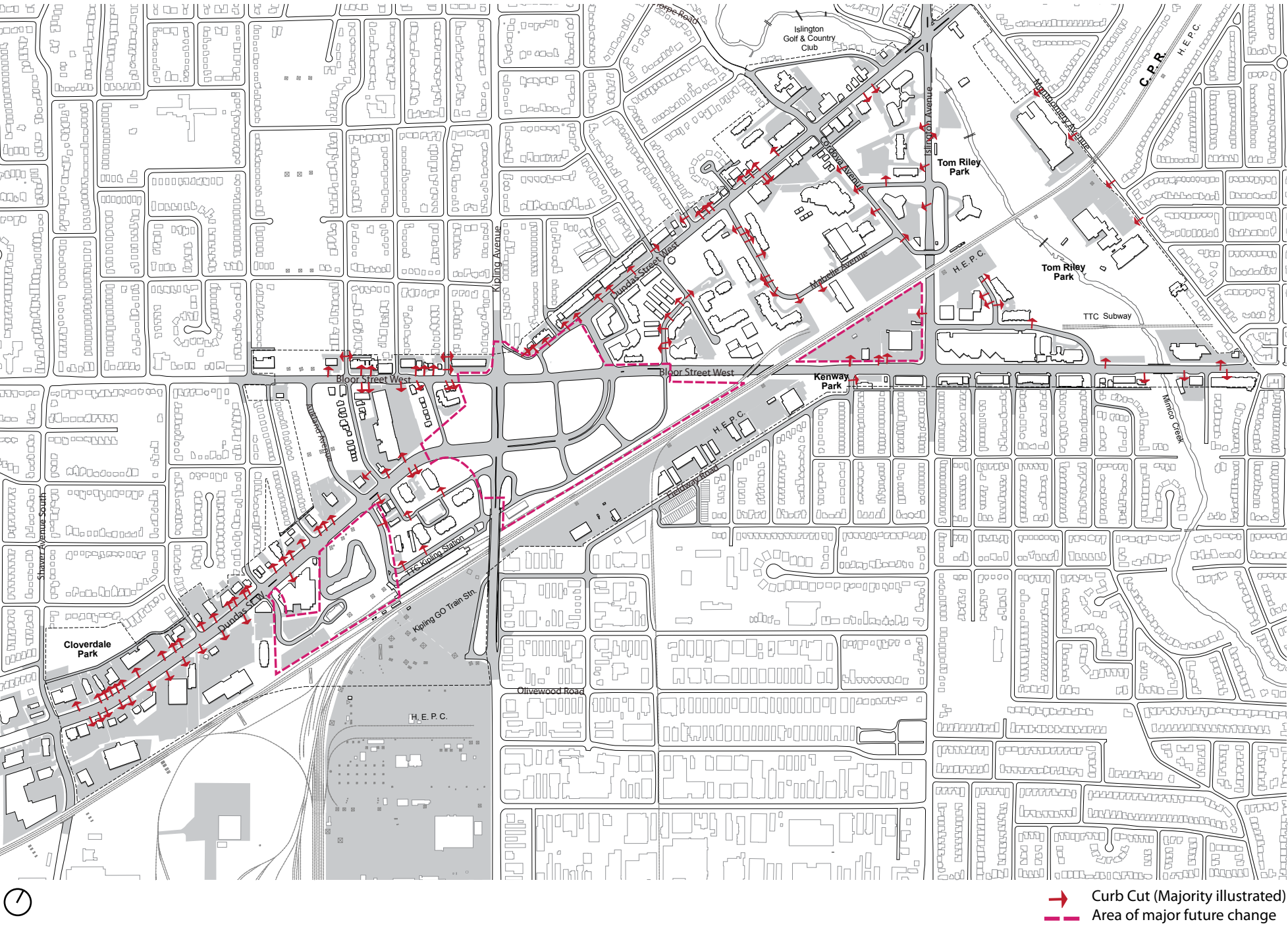


A harsh pedestrian realm on Dundas Street West, with no street trees, furniture, and disparate paving treatment

Map 9: Important Off-Road Pedestrian Paths



Map 10: Surface Parking and Roadways



The site is dominated by surface parking between the public realm and retail shops



Surface parking lots near Islington station create harsh and dangerous environments in important pedestrian corridors

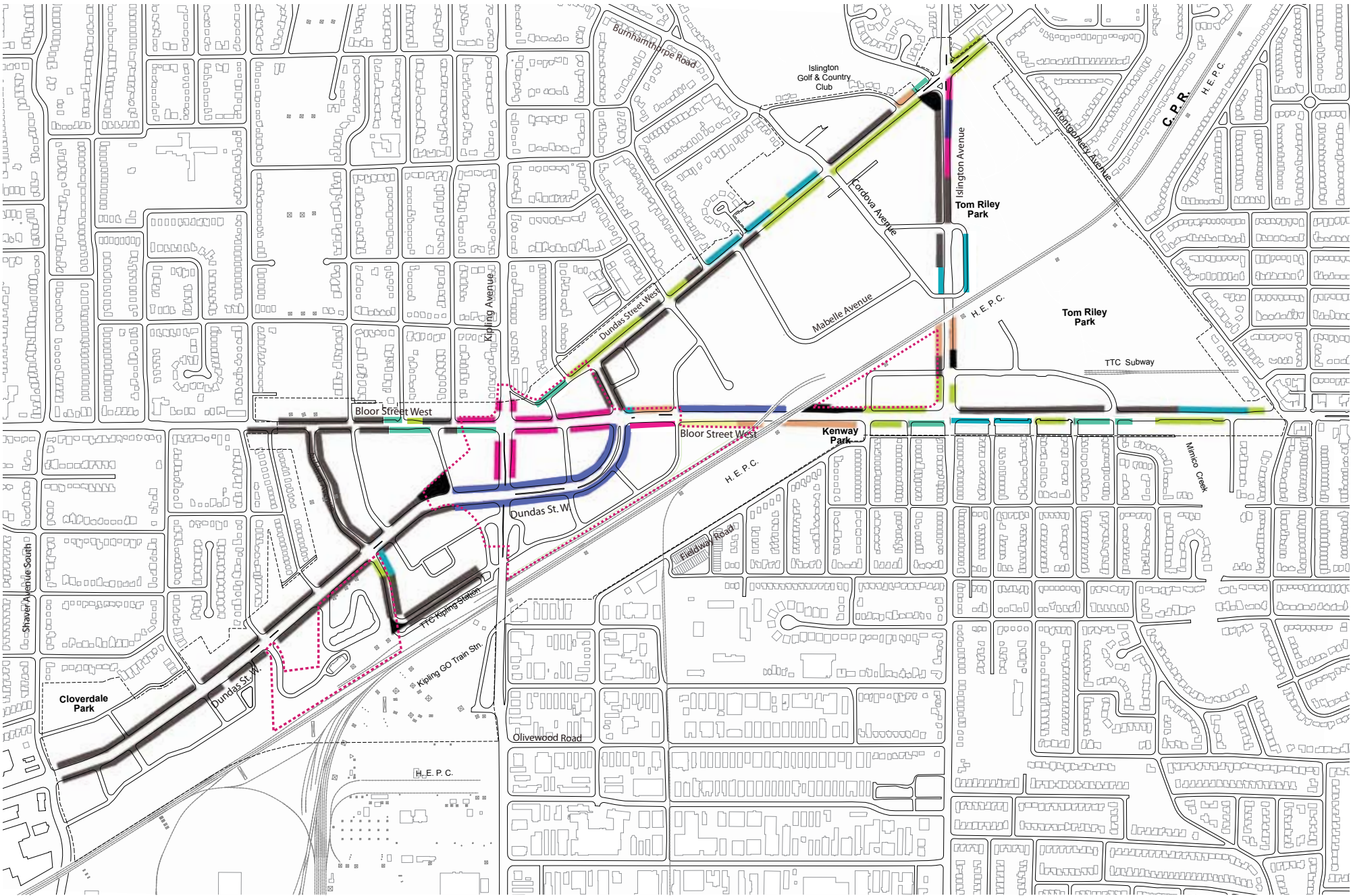


Curb cuts produce pedestrian-vehicle conflicts

Boulevard widths are highly variable and generally inconsistent throughout the Centre. Bloor Street east of Kipling and Dundas Street West east of Kipling in particular have a irregular sidewalk widths that create a disjointed and inconsistent experience for pedestrians. As a result of deep setbacks and surface parking encroachments, there is also an inconsistent streetwall that produces an uneven rhythm for pedestrians as they move through the Centre’s different areas.

While uniform boulevard widths are not expected or even desirable for the Centre, there is a need to introduce some consistency in certain areas that are priority pedestrian areas, such as Islington Village along Dundas Street West east of Kipling.

Map 11: Boulevard Width Assessment



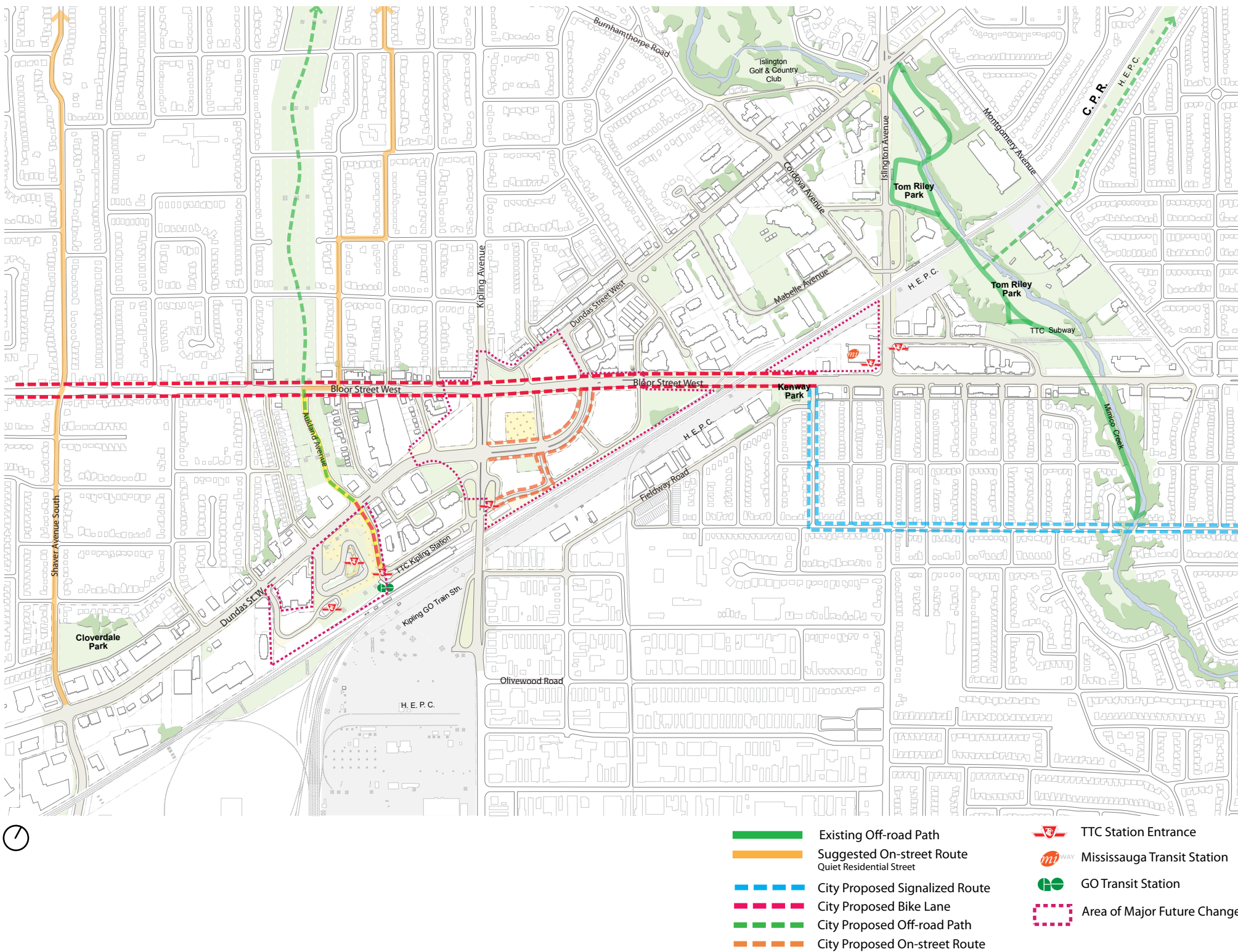
3.7 Cycling

There is very little cycling infrastructure in the Centre. Particularly in the western portion of the area, cyclists are forced to ride on the street under risky conditions, walk on the sidewalk, or take an alternate route. When they arrive at destinations, such as Kipling subway station, there are few places to securely lock and store their bicycles. The high volumes of traffic make on-road cycling infrastructure unsafe in this area, but there are other means by which cycling infrastructure can be implemented.

Greater facility integration with major destinations and transportation nodes will be key to encouraging a safe and balanced approach to cycling in the Centre.



Map 12: Existing Cycling Routes



3.8 Trees

The Centre has very few trees. There are only 200 trees in the public right-of-way in the entire area, resulting in an average of only 1 street tree for every ninety metres of sidewalk. Many of the trees that do exist in public lands are located in the green islands created by the Six Points Interchange, all of which will be removed to support the future re-alignment of these roads. The re-alignment is an important project for the future of the Centre, but will result in ever fewer trees than already exist today.

There is also very little tree diversity: the majority of the trees throughout the site are Honey Locusts, resulting in a near-monoculture.

The Centre can and must do better. Trees are a crucial component of creating a sense of place and contributing to a healthy, green community.

The full arborist report and recommended tree species list can be found in Appendix D.



There are virtually no trees along Dundas Street West

3.9 Street Furniture

The Centre is made up of disparate street furniture. Elements such as lighting, paving, information posts, benches, and planters are not harmonized throughout the area and do not give the impression that one is in an important civic place. At transit stations, dozens of competing newspaper boxes dominate the environment and contribute to a cluttered feel.

The Centre’s street furniture should reflect the importance of the area as an urban focal point and identify it as a distinct part of the city. Designed and located properly, street furniture both blends into and enhances the urban environment.



Existing street furniture creates a cluttered environment



A variety of street furniture details are employed