

St. Clarens Avenue Connection



Delaney Crescent Connection



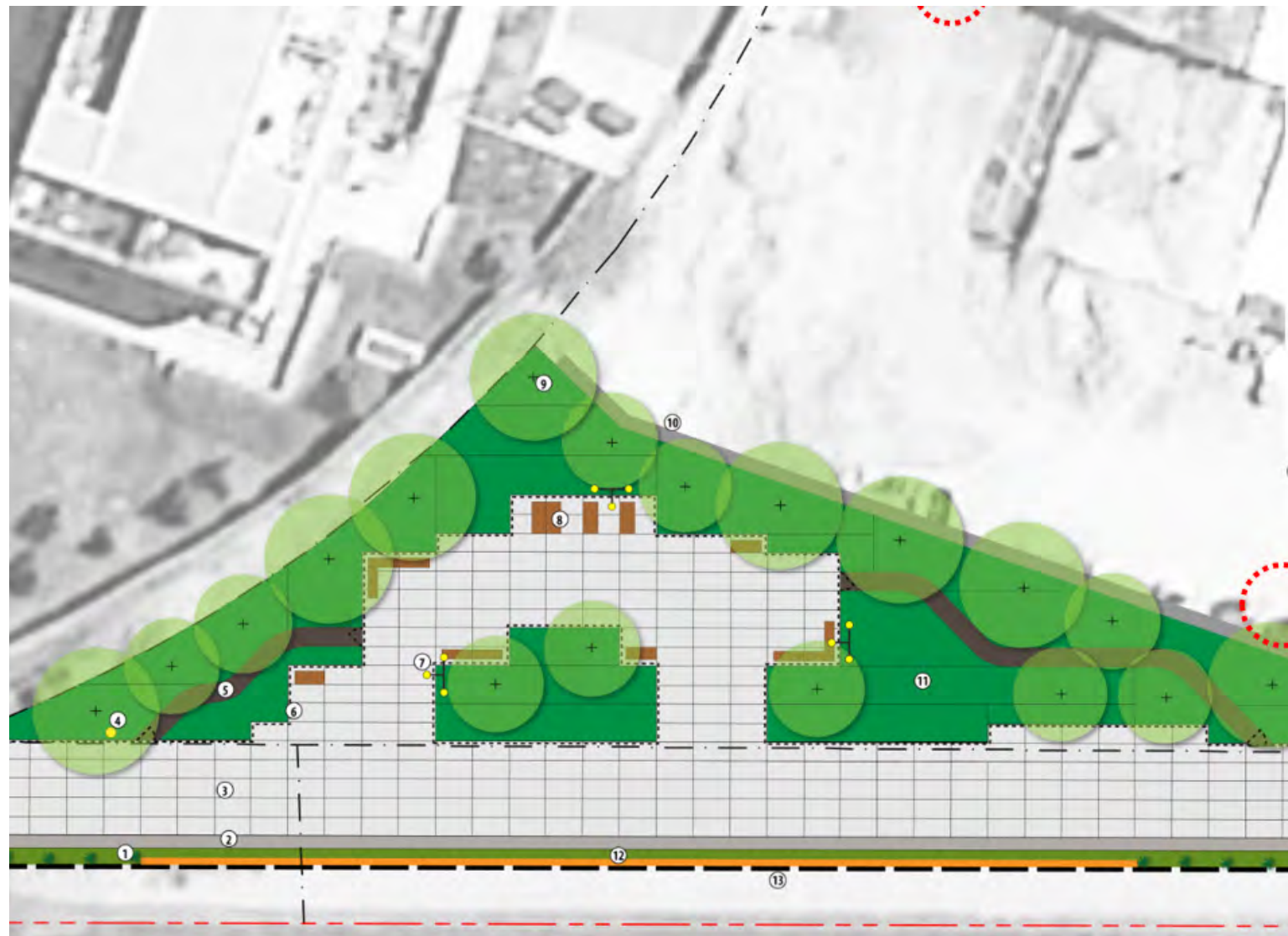
Queen Street West Connection



New Parks Adjacent to WTR

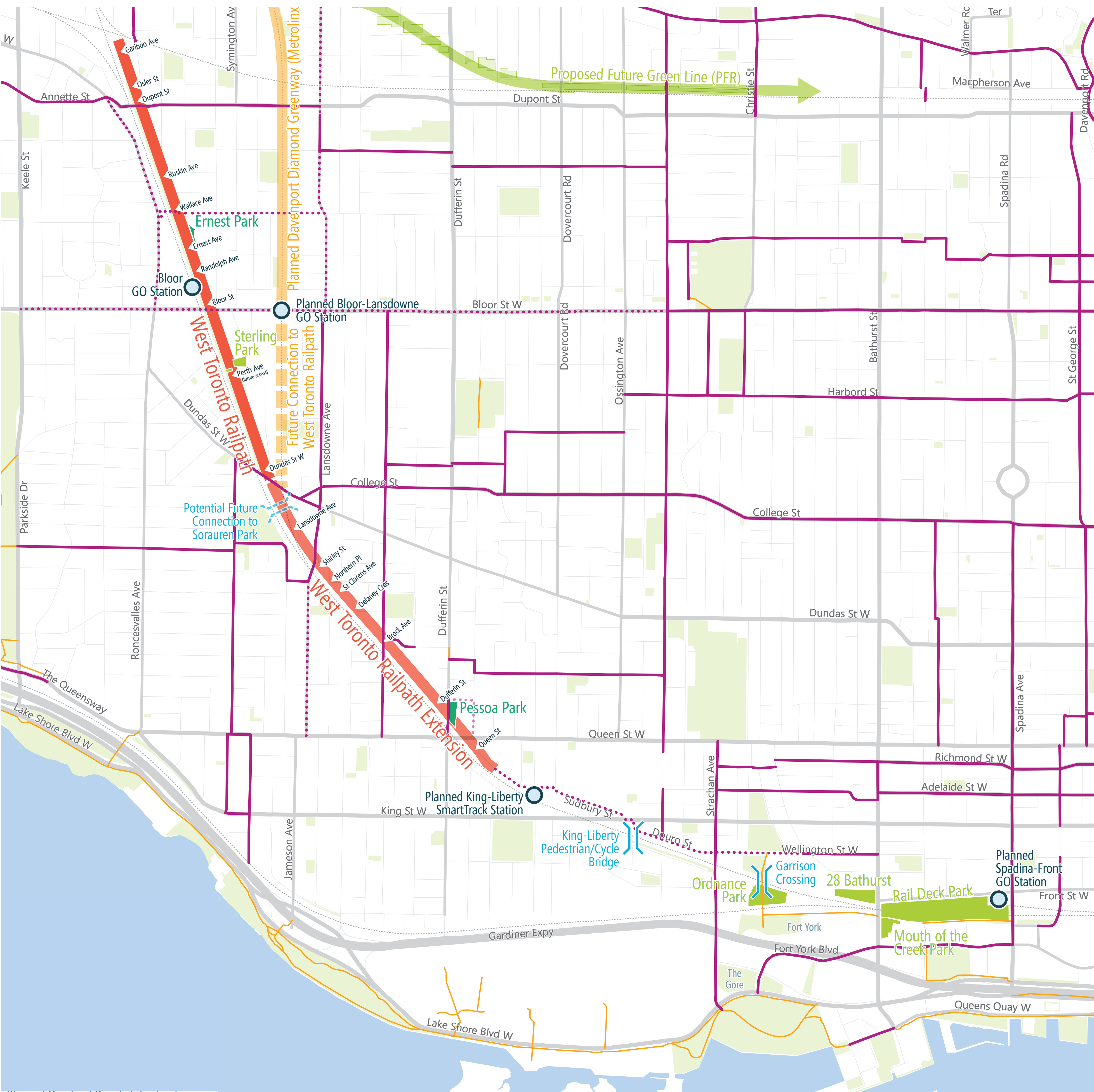
Ernest Park

- 740m² area
- Base park was completed in 2019
- Final park will be completed as part of the West Toronto Railpath Realignment work by Metrolinx

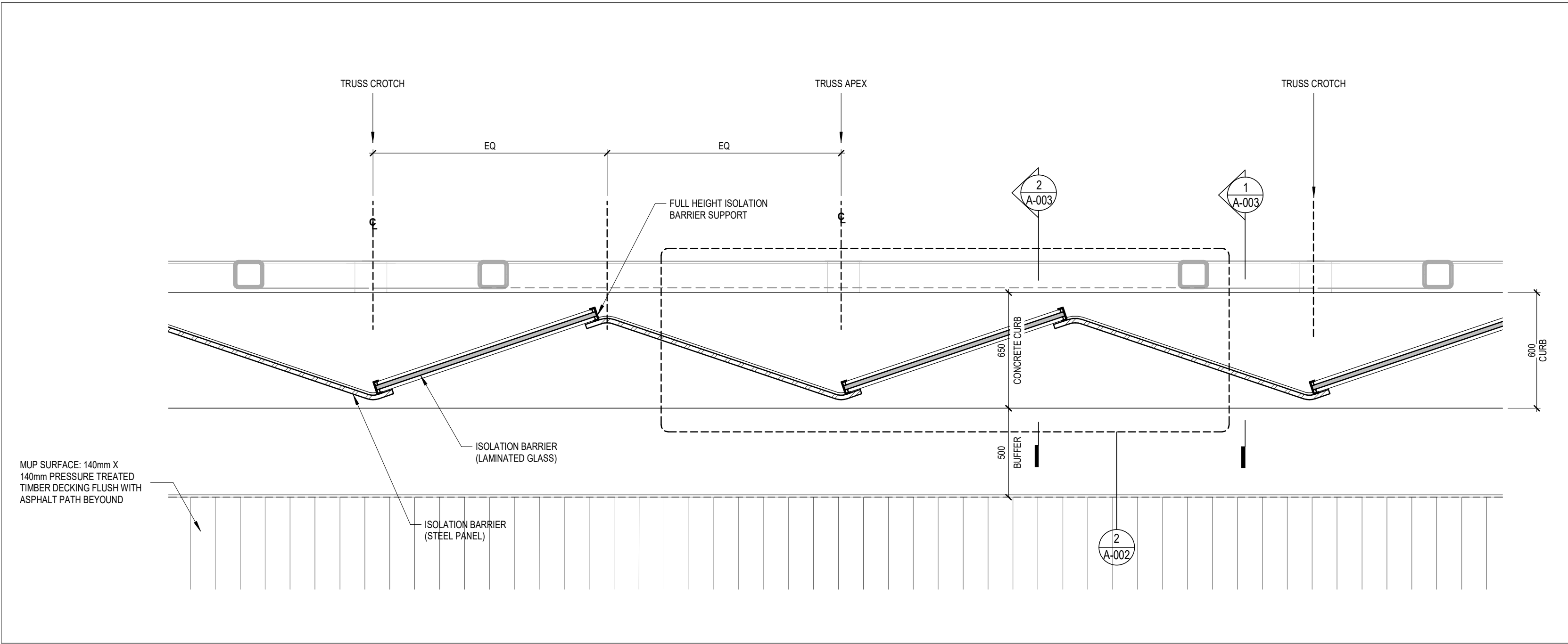


Pessoa Park

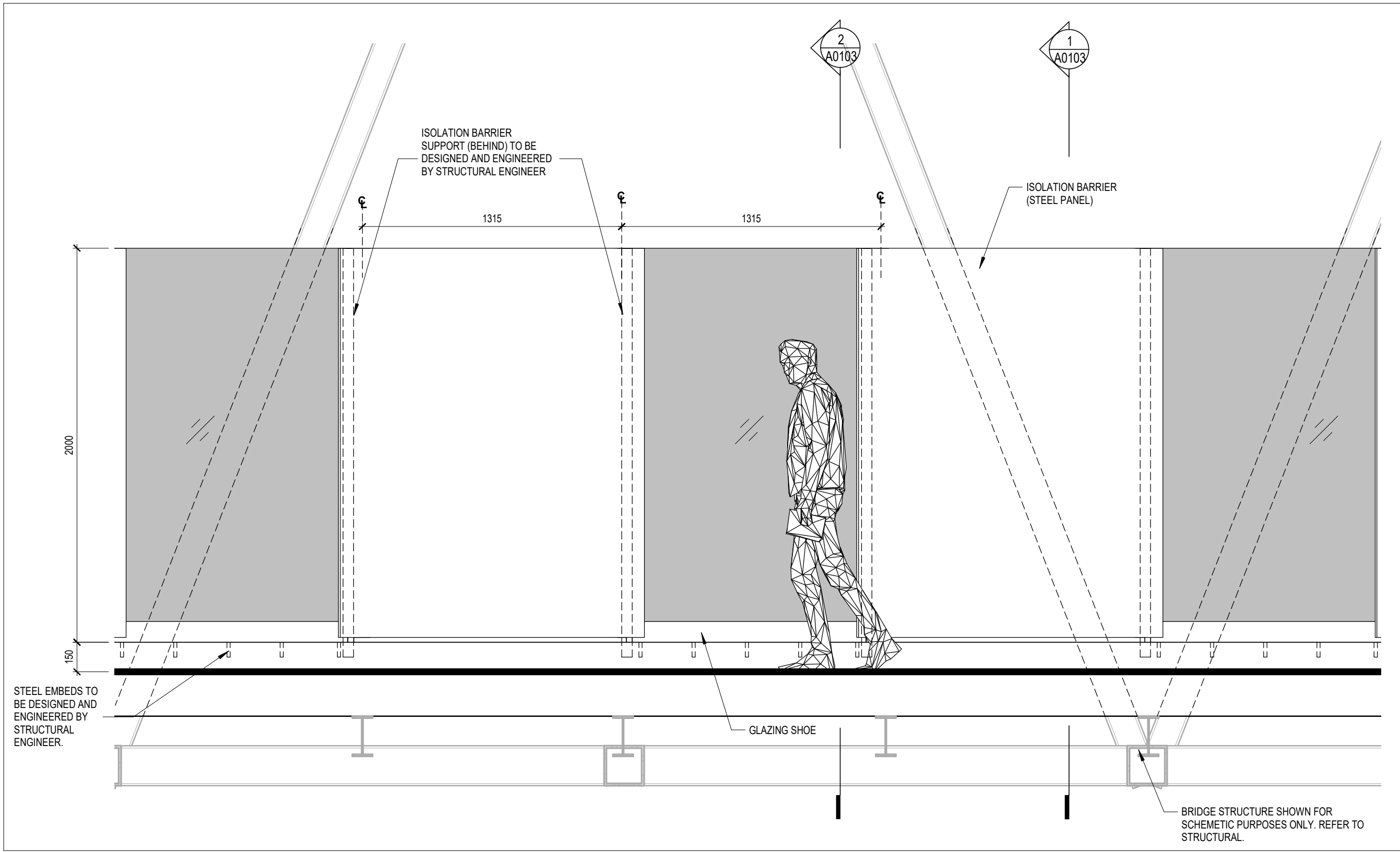
- 3090 m² area
- Will be completed in spring 2020



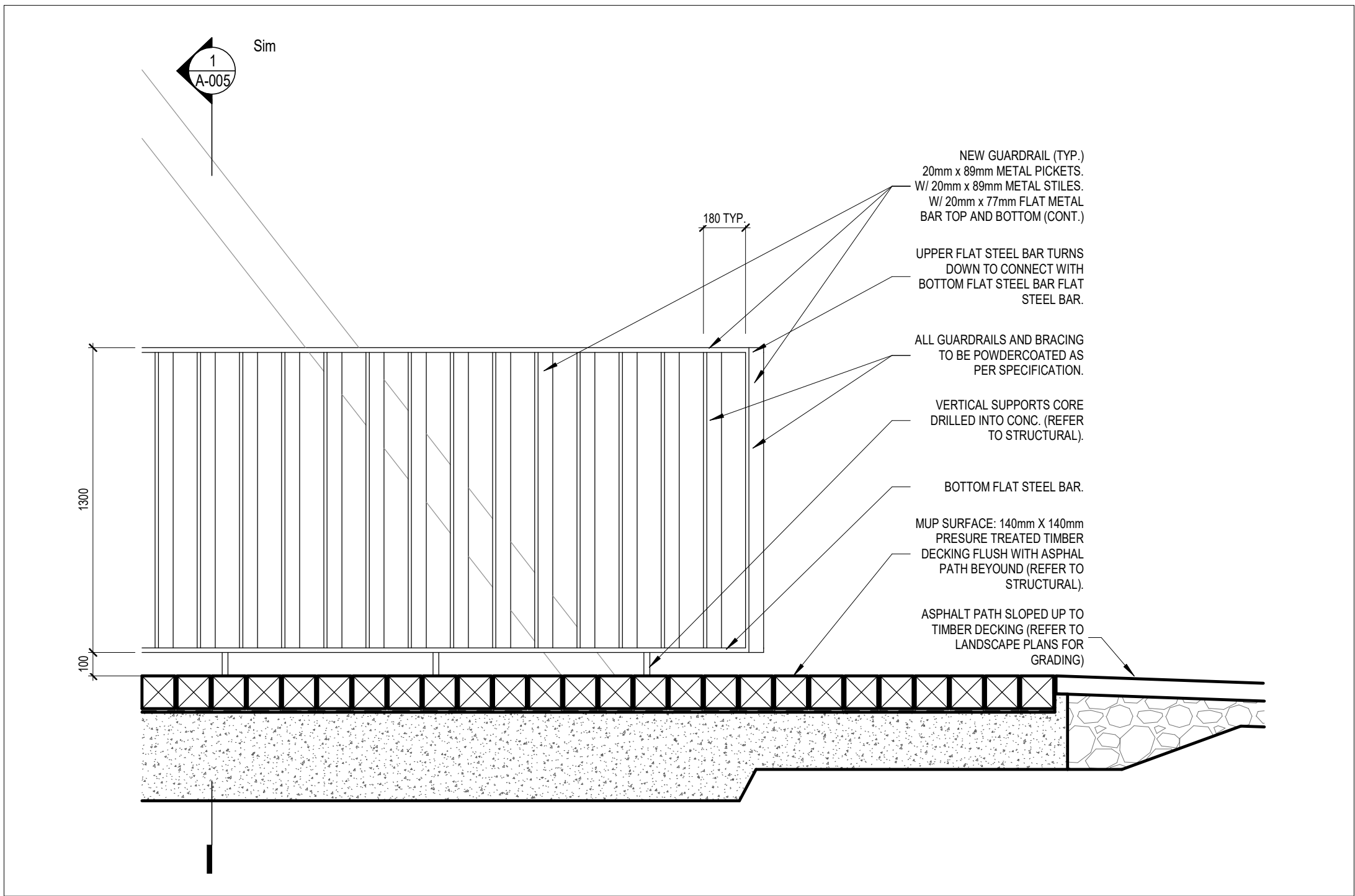
Barrie Rail Corridor Bridge



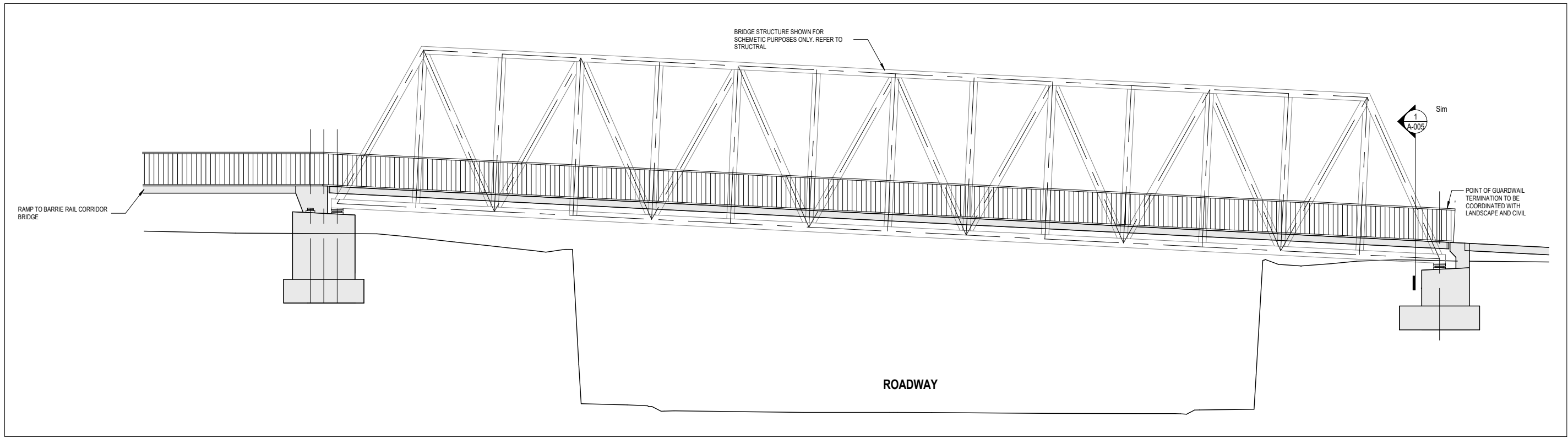
BARRIER RAIL CORRIDOR BRIDGE - ISOLATION BARRIER PARTIAL PLAN



Pedestrian Bridges at Lansdowne, Brock, and Queen



TYPICAL ROADWAY OVERPASS BRIDGE - SECTION AT GUARDRAIL TERMINATION



TYPICAL ROADWAY OVERPASS BRIDGE - ELEVATION



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1
DUPONT UNDERPASS

2
PLANET STORAGE, 1655 DUPONT ST

3
WALLACE LOFTS, 371 WALLACE AVE

4
RED CROSS, 21 RANDOLPH AVE

5
CHURCH OF FIRSTBORN, 72 PERTH AVE

HENDERSON BREWERY

Meeting Spot



Interpretive Signages along West Toronto Railpath

Railways have an inherently industrial heritage – first built to connect isolated raw materials and new markets, industrial land uses were often conveniently located adjacent to rail corridors. As rail lines and their associated rights-of-way changed over the years, rail corridors often had out-of-service or non-operational lines which lay vacant. As our cities continue to grow, these vacant rail corridors can serve as valuable linkages within the urban landscape.

ON THE SITE

The West Toronto Railpath lies on top of a rail line which was built to link Toronto with the area north of Orangeville and eventually to Lake Huron. It was built by The Toronto, Grey & Bruce and later operated by Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). From the 1950s until the late 1990s it functioned as a service track, known as the “Old Bruce”, and served various industries in the area, including Viceroy Rubber, Compressed Metals, Glidden Varnish, and Laura Secord. Many of the industrial buildings and warehouses from this time still exist today.

INTRODUCED VS INVASIVE SPECIES

Many plant and animal species have been introduced to Ontario by humans since European settlement, however not all of them are invasive. A species is considered invasive when it is not originally found in our region and when it causes environmental harm or harm to human health.

Invasive plants cause harm to our ecosystems by outcompeting native vegetation. They are usually aggressive growers which exclude native plants and lead to a decrease in biodiversity. Given that they evolved somewhere else, they often have no natural predators, and rarely offer the level of food or habitat for local wildlife that native plants do.

ON THE SITE

While railways are excellent at moving people, they also provide corridors for invasive species to travel along and spread. The planting strategy along the trail involved the removal of numerous invasive species, such as Dog Strangling Vine (*Vincetoxicum rossicum*), Manitoba Maple (*Acer negundo*), and Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*).

Tree of Heaven
(*Ailanthus altissima*)

In the 1980s the “Rails to Trails” movement began in North America, converting disused rail lines into public multi-use paths.

In 1998, the City of Toronto published an inventory of cycling opportunities throughout railway and hydro corridors. The “Old Bruce” line upon which the WTR is built was identified as a potential multi-use trail, and the City of Toronto finalized the purchase of the land from Cariboo Avenue to Dundas Street West in 2003.

During this time, Friends of the West Toronto Railpath is formed out of a local community meeting. This group of dedicated volunteers has been instrumental in bringing the plan to fruition, building support in both the local community and with politicians.

The design by Scott Torrance Landscape Architect Inc. with Brown & Storey Architects, was presented to the community in 2007 and in the fall of 2009 the West Toronto Railpath opened to the public. The Environmental Assessment for the next phase was completed in 2016, approving the extension of the Railpath south to Abell Street. HATCH and FORREC developed the design for the Railpath and the necessary amendments between Dupont and Dundas West due to the installation of a new Metrolinx track.

To learn more about the history of the WTR, visit www.railpath.ca.

Time Line of the WTR

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The four large-scale steel sculptures by John Dickson, collectively named Frontier, exist at the intersection of industry and nature. Their structure echoes the previously adjacent industrial architecture while simultaneously referencing natural landscape forms. The materiality and scale of the pieces reinforces these references, while the surrounding planting further embeds them into the site.

“Create Your Path”, a community-engaged project in partnership with the City of Toronto’s Street Art (StART) program, has installed numerous site-specific street art projects along the Railpath, including:

Indigenous artist Que Rockford collaborated with street artist Bacon for the mural on the Dundas West / Dupont Underpass;

Gradation by Lynette Postuma is a large-scale mural of colour changes painted on a building façade across from the Bloor GO and UP Station; and

The Wallace Lofts mural by Buck Teeth Girls Club, comprised of Nicole D’Amario, Andrea Manica, and Caitlin Taguibao.

The art along the West Toronto Railpath will continue to evolve through support from groups such as StART, Friends of the WTR, and =====\DeRAIL Platform for Art + Architecture.

Frontier
Public Art by John Dickson

Commonly found along railways and highways, a noise barrier is any structure in the landscape designed to protect site users from noise pollution. Noise barriers can take many forms and be made of many different materials, however those found along the West Toronto Railpath are called ‘post and panel’ noise walls and are made out of concrete and acrylic paneling. The transparent nature of the acrylic panels ensure sunlight reaches the Railpath, and allows a visual connection to and from the trains and landscape beyond.

Noise walls also present an opportunity to utilize the vertical face of the wall as a design element. Signage and wayfinding graphics are printed on the panels at every community connection point to help orient path users and cultivate a sense of identity. With the use of cables affixed to the panels, additional green space is integrated along the site through vine planting. Climbing vines will cover the noise walls, increasing their aesthetic appearance, bolstering the ecology of the site, and reducing maintenance concerns.

Lattice and Vine

WHY PLANT VINES?

Vines are climbing or trailing plants that make use of vertical elements like fences, walls, and the branches of other plants to grow. Some vines climb by wrapping around a support, like Bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*), where others use specialized shoots, like False Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus inserta*). A vine from the same family, the Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) produces adhesive pads that allow this vine to even stick to the surface smooth walls.

Vines flourish in locations with limited horizontal space such as railway corridors and along building facades. This allows for green space, enhanced biodiversity, and the creation of habitat in areas that are too narrow for other plants. The climbing habit of vines also adds seasonal interest to walls and fences, with foliage in the warmer months and an interesting branching structure in the winter.

ON THE SITE

Many areas along the West Toronto Railpath are narrow and offer little opportunity for planting trees or shrubs. By using vines, we are able to provide the ecological, functional, and aesthetic benefits of planting in these limited spaces.

Virginia Creeper
(*Parthenocissus inserta*)

Pollination is the process by which plants reproduce and generate seeds and fruit. Pollen is transferred from one plant to another, usually by animals or the wind. While the most common pollinators are bees, many different animals and insects help move pollen between flowers, including birds, bats, butterflies, moths, ants, flies, beetles, and pollen wasps.

POLLINATOR HEALTH

The survival of many plants and animals, and therefore the health of our ecosystems, depend on pollinators. In addition to biodiversity, pollinators play a crucial role in the production of many fruits and vegetables we rely on for food.

The number of pollinators has declined in recent years, but there are many things we can do – planting native species, reduced mowing, and leaving leaf litter in your garden are all great ways to help.

ON THE SITE

The West Toronto Railpath is planted with native, pollinator-friendly wildflowers, shrubs, grasses, and trees, which provide valuable habitat and food. Pesticides are not used as part of the maintenance of the trail plantings.

Purple Coneflower
(*Echinacea purpurea*)

WHY CHOOSE NATIVE PLANTS?

A native or indigenous species is any plant, animal, or other organism which occurs in an area because of natural processes and without any human intervention. The sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*) is an example of a tree which has grown in southern Ontario for thousands of years, long before European settlement.

Plants and animals which evolved together over millions of years create diverse and healthy ecosystems. These species thrive in local conditions, so they use less water, are more resistant to drought, require less maintenance, and don’t need chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Native plants also contribute to the local ecology by providing valuable habitat and food for wildlife.

ON THE SITE

Vegetation native to Southern Ontario has been used to design sustainable plant communities, which work together to grow and flourish, and also provide habitat and food for wildlife.

Sugar Maple
(*Acer saccharum*)

Adjacent Metrolinx Rail Corridor Works

Barrie Double Track Enabling Works

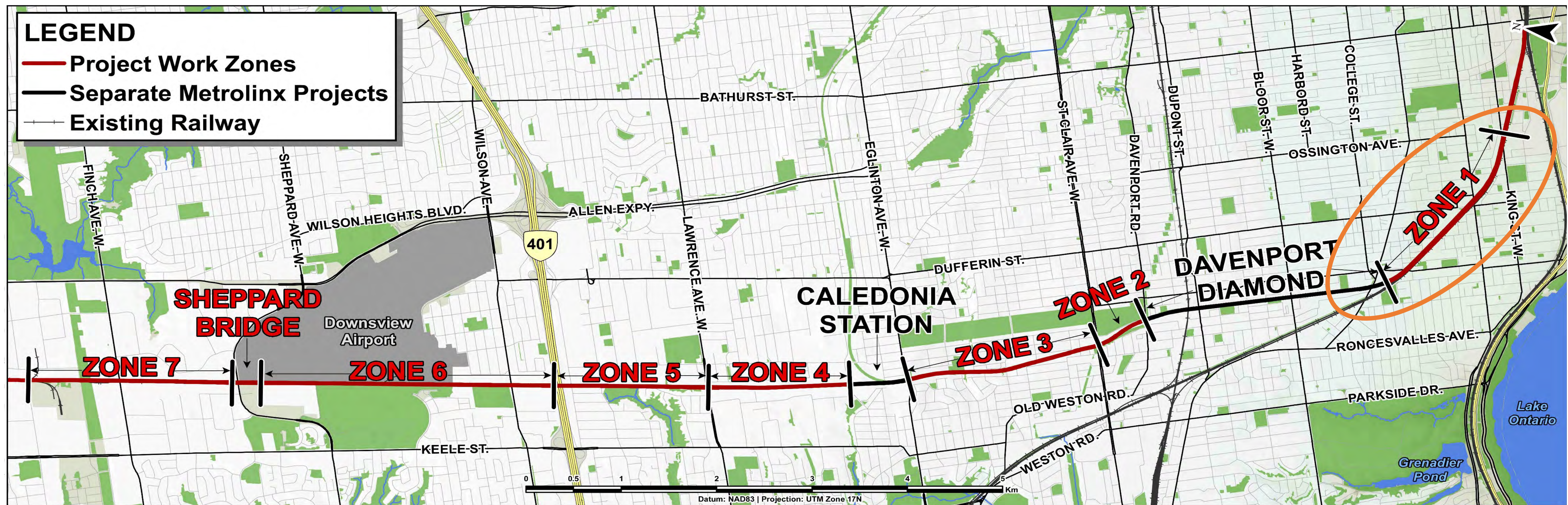
Construction during 2020 to 2021

- Scope includes:
 - Clearing and Grubbing
 - Noise Barrier Walls
 - High Security Fence
 - Utility Relocations

Kitchener 4th Track Works

Construction during 2020 to 2023

- Scope includes:
 - Grading and Additional Track
 - WTRP Realignment



Next Steps and Schedule

- Public Event No. 2: **February 26, 2020**
- Completion of Design and Construction Documents: **Early to Mid 2020**
- City of Toronto to obtain Metrolinx and Private Properties: **2020/2021**
- Construction proposed start: **2021/2022**

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