

# **Appendix D2**

## Visual Impact Assessment

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report identifies and characterizes the existing visual environment and evaluates the impacts of the Build Alternative compared to the No Build Alternative. The purpose of this Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) is to evaluate the proposed Project and assess its impacts, both positive and negative, on the visual resources in the Study Area.

The VIA was prepared using the guidelines and methodologies contained in Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) “Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessments of Highway Projects” (FHWA-HEP-15-029, 2015), under the guidance of a registered landscape architect (RLA) experienced in the preparation of visual impact assessments. The State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR) Visual Environmental Assessment Form Addendum was used to identify categories of applicable visually sensitive resources. Applicable portions of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Program Policy “Assessing and Mitigating Visual and Aesthetic Impacts” (NYSDEC DEP-00-2, 2019) were referenced in conjunction with the FHWA’s guidelines as a tool for evaluating visual and aesthetic impacts.

The VIA process is outlined in four phases below:

- **Establishment** – Define the visual character of the Project, documenting the regulatory context and defining the Area of Visual Effect (AVE).
- **Inventory** – Define the character of the affected environment (natural, cultural and Project), discuss affected populations, and define the existing or preferred condition of visual quality.
- **Analysis** – Evaluate impacts on visual quality and assess changes to the degree of visual quality as being beneficial, adverse, or neutral to the relationship viewers have with their visual environment.
- **Mitigation** – Define measures to avoid and minimize adverse visual impacts associated with a transportation Project and identify opportunities for enhancing visual quality.

## 2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Project is to reconnect the community surrounding the defined transportation corridor and improve the compatibility of the corridor with the adjacent land uses, while addressing the geometric, infrastructure, and multi-modal needs within the corridor in its current location. The transportation corridor is defined as NYS Route 33 (Kensington Expressway) and Humboldt Parkway between Best Street and Sidney Street.

The Build Alternative would reconstruct and cover the depressed section of the Kensington Expressway, creating a 4,150-foot-long tunnel between Sidney Street and Dodge Street. The proposed tunnel would consist of two independent tubes, each of which would provide three travel lanes in each direction for NYS Route 33. Humboldt Parkway northbound and southbound would be reconstructed on a new alignment from Northampton Street to near Hamlin Road and would be separated by a proposed 90-foot-wide landscaped center median where the tunnel is located. The Humboldt Parkway reconstruction would include a sidewalk, parking lane, bicycle lane and one travel lane in each direction.

Approximately 3.5 feet of soil depth would be provided on the tunnel deck and planted with trees (up to 50 feet in height at maturity). The proposed landscaping plan involves rows of four trees at a diagonal in the Humboldt Parkway median. Tree plantings would also be provided along the outside of Humboldt Parkway between the parking lane and the sidewalk.

The existing bridge structures over NYS Route 33 at East Ferry Street, East Utica Street, Northampton Street, and Dodge Street would be removed; the newly constructed cap over the tunnel would reconnect these streets at-grade, including additional reconnections at Sidney Street/Butler Avenue, Winslow Avenue and Riley Street.

The Best Street signalized intersections with the NYS Route 33 ramps would be replaced by a roundabout, and a roundabout would also replace the adjacent signalized intersection between Best Street, Herman Street and West Parade Avenue. The bridge at Best Street would be replaced with a wider bridge structure to accommodate the roundabouts. For additional information regarding the description of the Project, refer to Chapter 3 of the Draft Design Report/Environmental Assessment (DDR/EA).

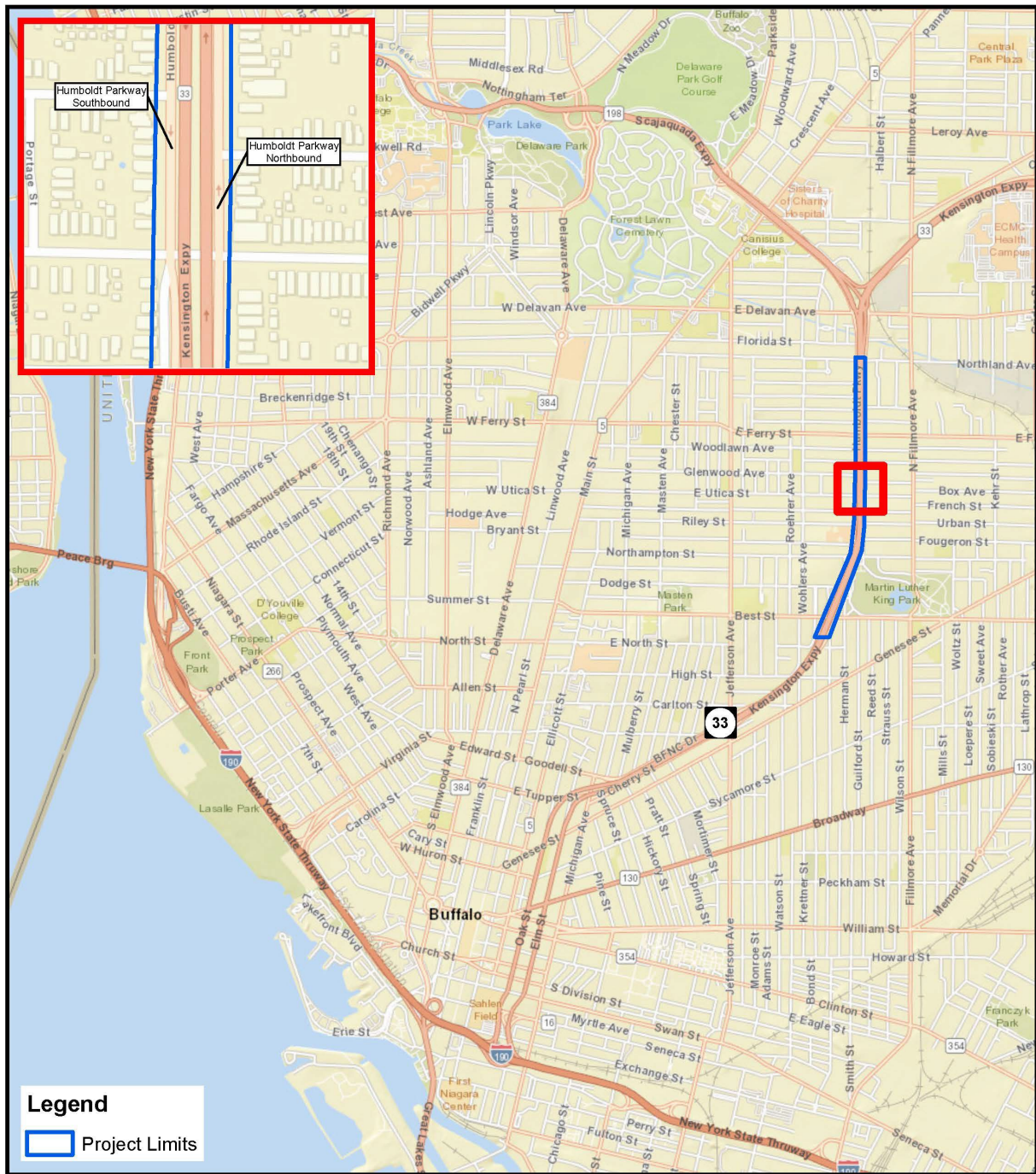
## **2.1 Project Location**

The Project is located in the City of Buffalo, Erie County, New York (see Figure 1). The Project limits (limits of physical disturbance) extend along the Kensington Expressway and Humboldt Parkway from approximately High Street (southern limit) to approximately Northland Avenue (northern limit), a total distance of approximately 7,100 feet. Five east-west bridges traverse the Kensington Expressway (East Ferry Street, East Utica Street, Northampton Street, Dodge Street and Best Street) within the transportation corridor. Humboldt Parkway, which begins at Dodge Street and extends north beyond the Project limits, is adjacent to the Kensington Expressway on both sides and is part of the Project.

The Kensington Expressway functions as a critical link in the regional transportation system by providing a direct link to Downtown Buffalo from major routes, such as the Scajaquada Expressway (NYS Route 198) and the NYS Thruway (I-90). Over 75,000 vehicles use the Kensington Expressway per day. The Kensington Expressway is an established commuter route between downtown Buffalo and the city's northern and eastern neighborhoods and many suburban communities.

The land uses surrounding the Project consist of urban residential neighborhoods generally constructed in the early 1900s, with commercial strips concentrated on Fillmore Avenue and Genesee Street (see Figure 2). The transportation corridor traverses several neighborhoods, including Hamlin Park, Masten Park, Delavan-Grider, MLK Park, and to a lesser extent, Broadway-Fillmore and the Fruit Belt. The properties along Humboldt Parkway are primarily residential in nature, including single and multi-family houses. The area includes numerous churches and places of worship as well as several schools, educational facilities, and community services. At the southern terminus of the Humboldt Parkway are Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (MLK Park) and the Buffalo Museum of Science.





**Figure 1**

**Project Location Map**

PIN 5512.52  
NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY

Source: Erie County 2021, LaBella 2023, NYSDOT 2021, NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2022, World Street Map.

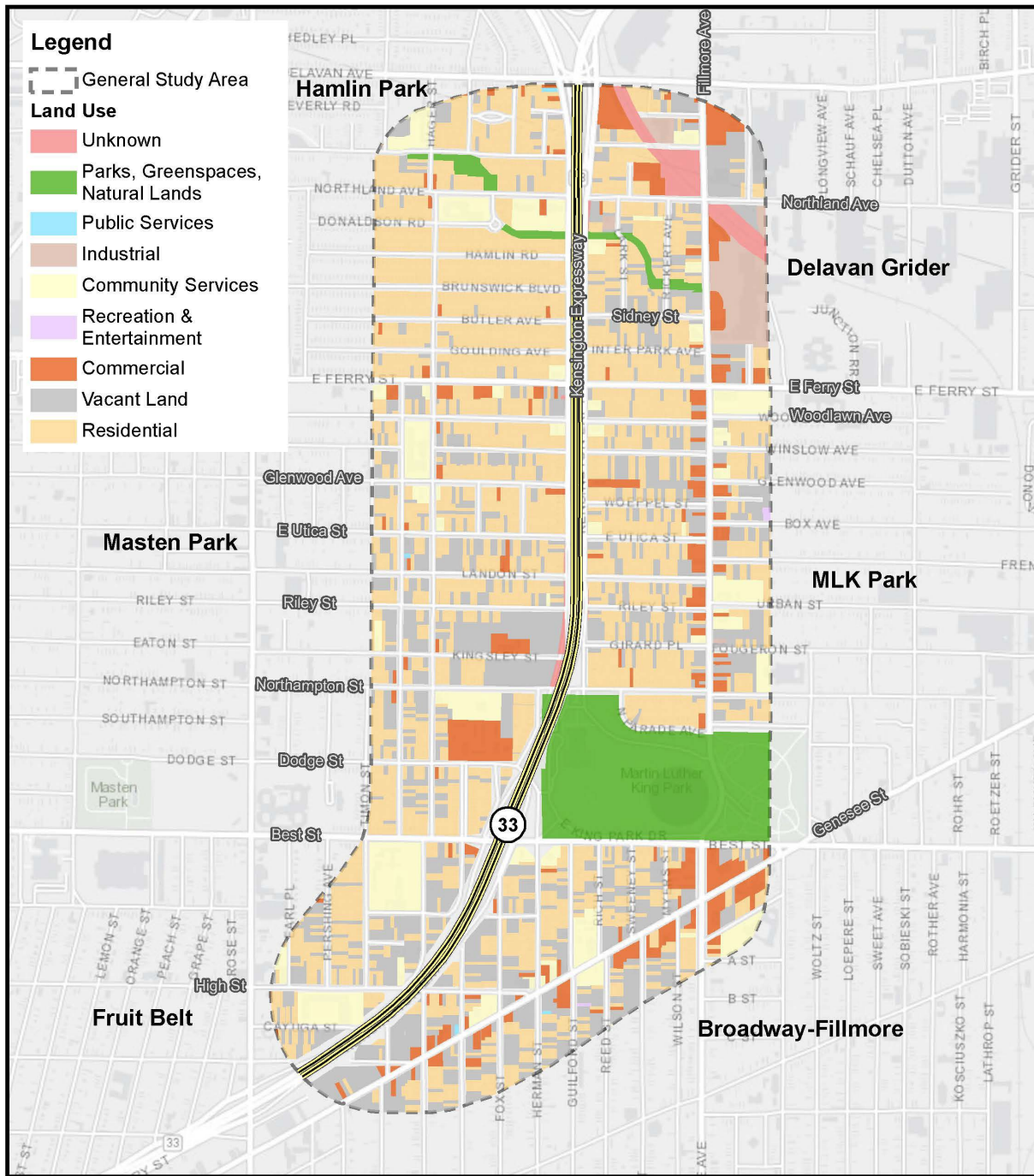
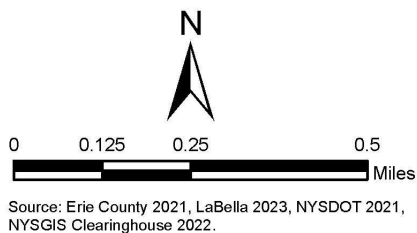


Figure 2

Land Use

PIN 5512.52

NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY



### 3. REGULATORY CONTEXT

State and federal plans, policies, and regulations related to visual resources, views, or visual quality relevant to the Project were reviewed and included the following:

- **FHWA's "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures" (23 CFR Part 771)**, which prescribes the policies and procedures of the FHWA for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended (NEPA), and the regulation of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), 40 CFR 1500-1508.
- **FHWA's "Guidelines for Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects" (January 2015)**, which was used as the primary guidance resource for the VIA.
- **NYSDEC's "Assessing and Mitigating Visual and Aesthetic Impacts" (DEP-00-2, 2019)**, was used as a reference in conjunction with the FHWA's guidelines for evaluating visual and aesthetic impacts. NYSDEC's Policy applies to facilities regulated by the NYSDEC located in visual proximity to sensitive land uses, such as historic properties and certain types of preserved lands/parks.

There are no wildlife or waterfowl refuges in the vicinity of the transportation corridor. The historic sites in the vicinity of the transportation corridor are discussed in Section 4.6 of the DDR/EA. There are three grassy medians within the Study Area. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and the Scajaquada Creek Trail are partially within the Study Area. Parks and recreational areas along the transportation corridor are discussed in Section 4.7 of the DDR/EA. There are no Section 6(f) properties within the Study Area (see Section 4.7 of the DDR/EA).

The visual resources, the existing visual character, quality of the affected environment, and associated viewer response provided the framework for assessing the changes in visual quality that would occur as a result of the Project.

### 4. EXISTING VISUAL CHARACTER

The Kensington Expressway is a multi-lane state highway completed in 1970. Within the Project limits, the Kensington Expressway generally consists of three general use lanes in each direction in a depressed section with concrete retaining walls on either side. The Humboldt Parkway runs parallel to the expressway on each side, connecting to the expressway entrance and exit ramps.

Photographs 1 through 8 provide representative views of the existing visual character along the transportation corridor. Figure 3 provides an overview of existing edge conditions along the transportation corridor, showing that the majority of the corridor consists of sections with concrete retaining walls. There are a smaller number of areas where the transportation corridor is lined by vegetation. These areas serve as a visual transition from the concrete edge to the residential/greenery areas to the east and west of the transportation corridor.

The northern limit of the Project is Northland Avenue. Traveling south, the Scajaquada Creek Trail is located between Northland Avenue and Hamlin Road, connecting Horace 'Billy' Johnson Park (between Florida Street and Northland Avenue) across the Kensington Expressway via the

Scajaquada Creek Trail Footbridge to Lark Street to the east and beyond, following through to its eastern terminus at Fillmore Avenue. The Kensington Expressway then travels under bridges that carry East Ferry Street, East Utica Street, Northampton Street, Dodge Street and Best Street.

The overhead bridges at Best Street, Dodge Street, and Northampton Street were built in 1963 and the overhead bridges at East Utica Street and East Ferry Street were built in 1970. All five of the bridges have their original decks, which have exceeded their expected 40-year service life. The bridges all have steel multi-girder superstructures with steel slider bearings and are multi-span simple-span bridges.

The Best Street to Sidney Street section of the Kensington Expressway is depressed and has continuous retaining walls on both sides of the expressway (heights range from approximately 8 feet to 27 feet), except for the east side between Best Street and West Parade Avenue. South of Best Street, the Kensington Expressway vertical profile transitions to a more gradual cut section (without retaining walls, except at bridges) and eventually to an at-grade profile. North of Sidney Street, the profile also transitions to at-grade.

In the vicinity of the Project, there are three public parks, three grassy medians, a landscaped traffic circle, and the Scajaquada Creek Trail. MLK Jr. Park is made up of 56.13 acres in total and features 2 basketball courts, a concession stand, 2.8 miles of multi-use trails, 8 picnic shelters, 2 playgrounds, 2 restroom facilities, and 4 tennis courts. The other two parks, Horace 'Billy' Johnson Park (in the Hamlin Park neighborhood) and Box Avenue Park (a few blocks north of MLK Jr. Park) are small neighborhood parks that contain open grassy land, playgrounds, and/or basketball courts.

From the residential and institutional buildings lining the higher elevated Humboldt Parkway, the transportation corridor is visually characterized by open sky viewsheds that are partly obstructed (during foliage seasons) by mature trees on the outer shoulders of Humboldt Parkway and in some areas, the corridor embankments. This is largely because the Kensington Expressway is depressed relative to the adjoining topography. Between Dodge Street and Riley Street, the transportation corridor is somewhat wider while the Kensington Expressway stays essentially the same width, allowing more area for growth of trees and landscaping. The trees and plantings along the transportation corridor including Humboldt Parkway are a visual asset to the adjacent neighborhoods. Viewsheds are primarily from the streets and the residential neighbors that line the transportation corridor.



**Figure 3**  
Existing Edge Conditions

PIN 5512.52  
NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY

Source: Erie County 2021, LaBella 2023,  
NYSDOT 2021, NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2022.



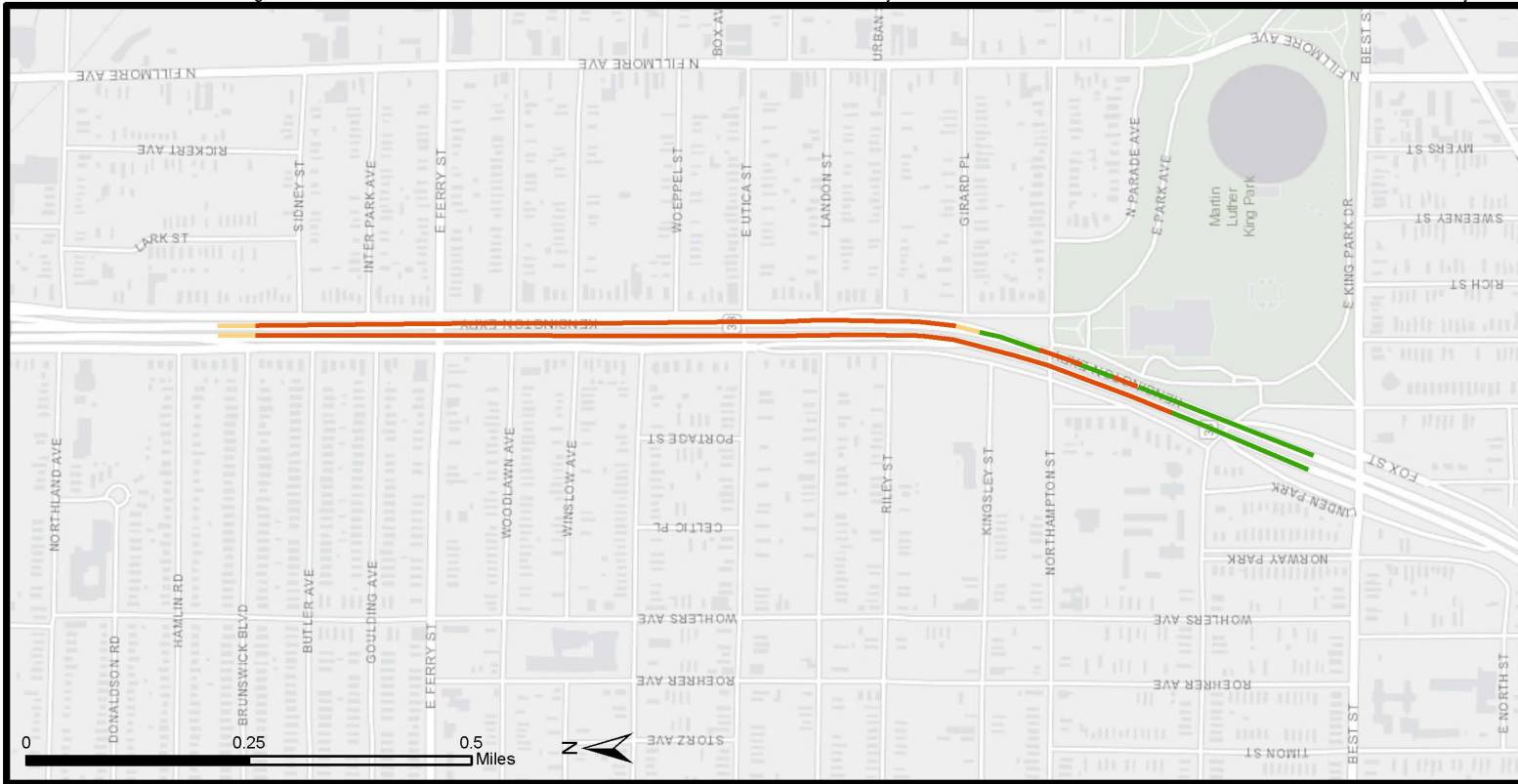
Form-lined Concrete Retaining Wall



Low Concrete Wall with Greenery



Transitional Form-lined Concrete Retaining  
Wall to Residential/Greenery



Photograph 1. Existing visual character (view northeast from West Parade Avenue)



Photograph 2. Existing visual character (view north from Buffalo Museum of Science)





Photograph 3. Existing visual character (view southwest of vacant parcel from Humboldt Parkway southbound)



Photograph 4. Existing visual character (view looking south along Humboldt Parkway northbound)



Photograph 5. Existing visual character (view west of the Kensington Expressway and residential properties from Humboldt Parkway northbound)



Photograph 6. Existing visual character (view north along Humboldt Parkway northbound)





Photograph 7. Existing visual character (view northeast from Dodge Street bridge)



Photograph 8. Existing visual character (view north from East Utica Street bridge)



## 5. AREA OF VISUAL EFFECT

The area of Project visibility is referred to as the Area of Visual Effect (AVE). It is determined by the physical constraints of the environment and the physiological limits of human sight.

An initial AVE was defined as a one-half-mile offset from the Project limits, due to the surrounding landscape and vegetation, a large amount of built urban structures, and limits of human sight. The Kensington Expressway's lower elevation north of Best Street further limits the views of motorists, as well as viewers from properties along Humboldt Parkway. However, the one-half-mile is conservative and accounts for those areas where the Kensington Expressway is closer to the surrounding grade level—south of Best Street and north of Sidney Street. The AVE was further refined using procedures consistent with the methodology developed by FHWA's "Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects" (January 2015). The specific procedures used to assess potential Project visibility and visual impacts, and ultimately define the Project AVE, as well as the methodology employed for each technique are described in the following section.

### 5.1 Determining Viewsheds

There are two types of viewsheds—static and dynamic. Both types of viewsheds are defined by what people can see in the environment and are the result of the intersection between the physical constraints of the environment and the physiological limits of human perception. Dynamic viewsheds are what travelers on the road see as they move through the landscape. Static viewsheds are what neighbors of the road see from a stationary location. Static viewsheds that are based only on landform and not constrained by any other obstacles generate the largest possible AVE. Most landscapes, however, contain some vegetation or structures that obscure views and restrict the potential viewshed. Given that obstacles frequently obscure views, and the inherent constraints of human perception, viewers are typically restricted to seeing only a few miles, even on a clear day, rendering the AVE much smaller than predicted by traditional viewshed analysis. The AVE was defined as the sum of the viewsheds of all travelers with views from the road and all neighbors with views of the road.

The initial AVE was organized into three zones to represent areas of high visibility (0 miles to one-eighth-mile radius from the transportation corridor), intermediate visibility (one-eighth mile to one-quarter-mile radius from the transportation corridor), and low visibility (one-quarter mile to one-half-mile radius from the transportation corridor). Because there are other features that affect the visibility to and from the Project, the AVE was further refined to consider topography, vegetation, the built environment, and visual sensitivity.

Figure 4 shows the extents of the three zones of visibility overlaid on a two-foot contour map. This map shows the topography along the transportation corridor is relatively flat. Variances in topography will impact the distances of viewsheds. As such, viewers at the higher elevations at both the southern and northern ends of the transportation corridor will have a slightly longer viewshed than viewers to each side of the corridor. The topography surrounding the east and west sides of the corridor is consistent and therefore, will not affect viewsheds.

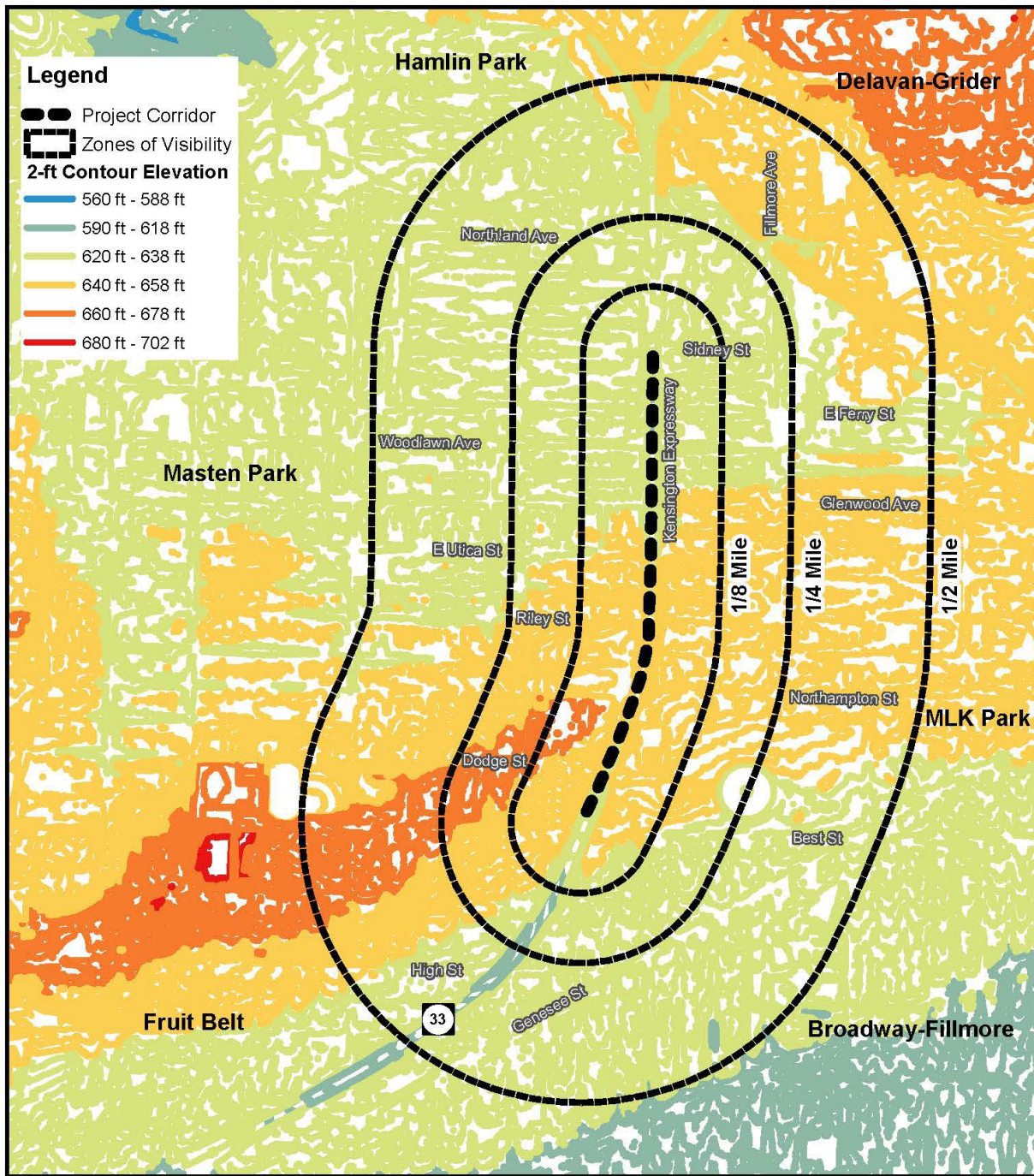
In terms of building height (number of floors), most of the AVE is relatively uniform with one to two-and-a-half story buildings. The Buffalo Museum of Science is a four-story building adjacent to the transportation corridor and is included in the AVE because it provides views of and is visible from the Kensington Expressway.

There are several visually sensitive resources identified in the AVE, including historic properties and parkland. Properties determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places include The Buffalo Museum of Science, Martin Luther King Jr. Park, Memorial Baptist Church, Tried Stone Baptist Church, and the Faith Assembly Baptist Church, among other individually eligible properties and districts (see DDR/EA Section 4.6). The AVE also contains the Scajaquada Creek Trail, the Linden Park median, and the Norway Park medians. These resources were considered when selecting and analyzing views, and the proximity of these resources was considered when assessing visual impacts. Further information regarding these sites is provided in Section 4.6 and Section 4.7 of the DDR/EA.

Development of the AVE considered topography of the area surrounding the Project, size and height of buildings including residential structures, open spaces and openings between buildings as a guide to determine the extent of where the proposed Project would be visible. Where grades were level with the Project site, multiple buildings and openings between buildings were interspersed, the assumption was that some portion of the proposed Project may be visible from within 400 feet of the Project limits. The size of the AVE considered the location of sensitive viewer groups and the length of time viewers would be afforded to focus on particular elements within view. Residents and pedestrians, for example, will have more time to view and focus on elements of the Project from a further distance from the Project whereas drivers will be more focused on driving.

The approximate AVE boundaries are shown in Figure 5.





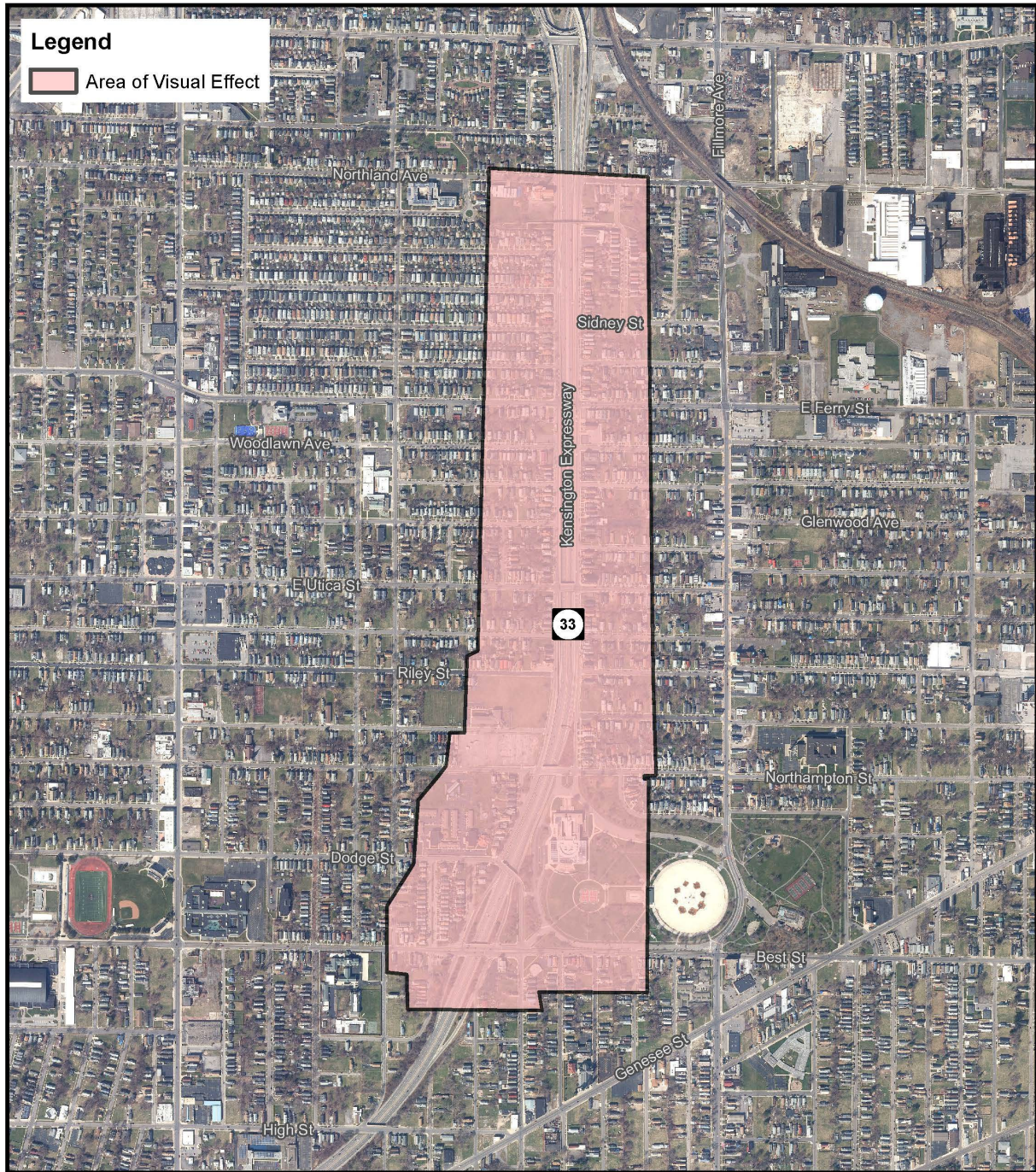
**Figure 4**

**Topography Map**

PIN 5512.52  
NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY

Source: Erie County 2021, LaBella 2023, NYSDOT 2021, NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2022, World Street Map.





**Figure 5**

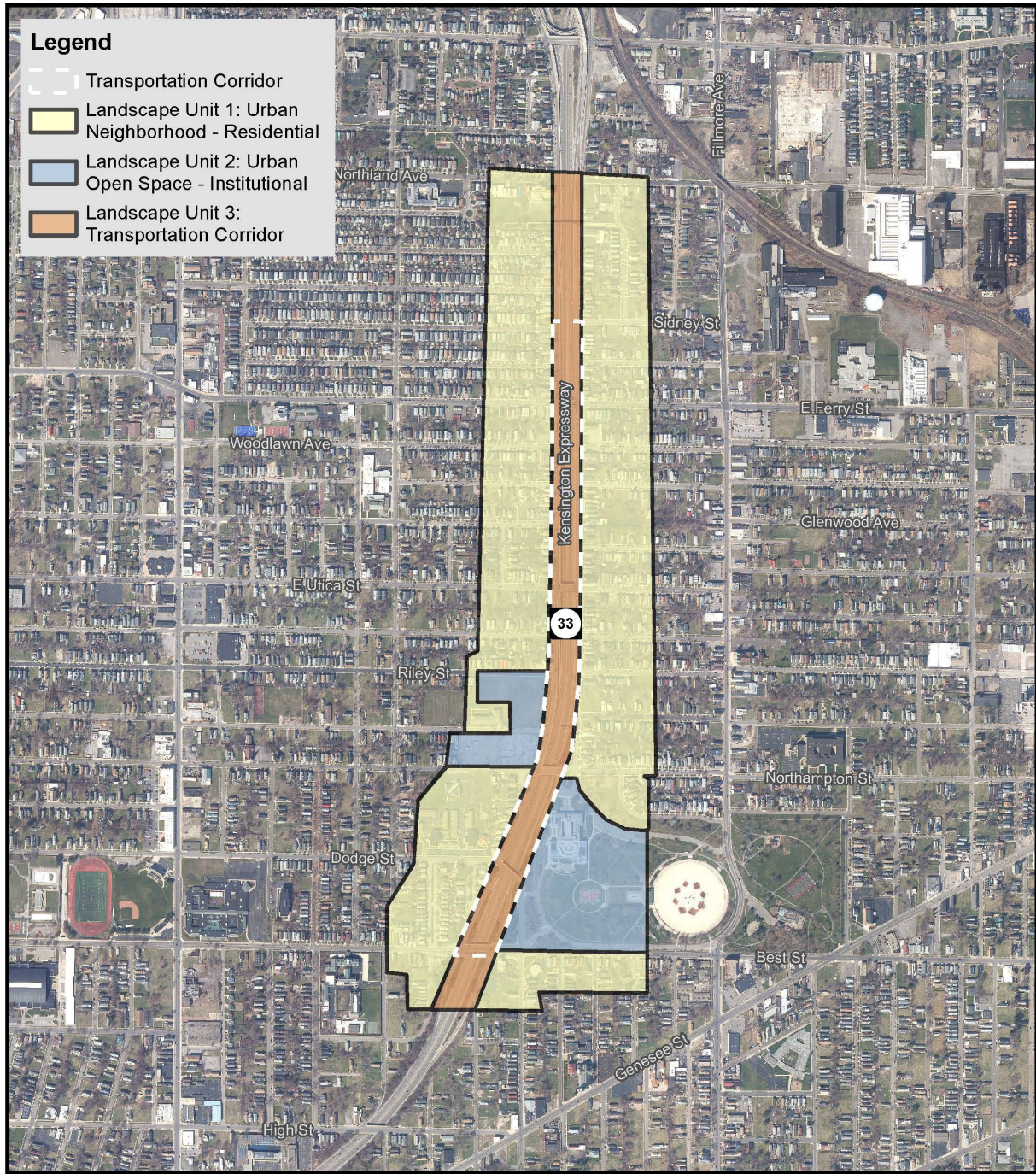
**Area of Visual Effect Map**

PIN 5512.52

NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY

Source: Erie County 2021, LaBella 2023, NYSDOT 2021,  
NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2022, World Street Map.





**Figure 6**

**Landscape Units Map**

PIN 5512.52

NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project

Erie County, NY

Source: Erie County 2021, LaBella 2023, NYSDOT 2021, NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2022, World Street Map.

## 5.2 Landscape Units

As described in Section 4.4.3 of the FHWA's Guidelines, the geographic unit on which impacts on visual character, viewers, and visual quality are assessed is called a landscape unit. Landscape units are defined by viewsheds and land uses. Landscape units are geographic areas that generally correspond to the areas with a distinct visual character, defined by factors such as topography, density, scale, architectural character, land use, vegetation, and use by different viewer groups. A landscape unit is an area with visual boundaries that have relatively homogeneous visual characteristics.

To provide a framework for comparing the visual effects of the Project, the AVE was organized into three distinct landscape units. These landscape units are described below and shown in Figure 6.

### **5.2.1 Landscape Unit #1: Urban Neighborhood – Residential**

The Urban Neighborhood – Residential Landscape Unit is the largest Landscape Unit in the AVE and includes residential land uses along the transportation corridor. Residential properties vary from single-family detached and semi-detached to low (3-story and under) multi-unit apartment buildings. Viewers in this group include motoring, pedestrian and bicycling, touring, and commuting travelers on Humboldt Parkway and adjacent local roads and residential neighbors. Residential users located on Humboldt Parkway have dominant views of the depressed portion of the Kensington Expressway. Open sky views are available from the residences and buildings lining Humboldt Parkway. Mature trees are located in some areas along Humboldt Parkway; however, the transportation corridor contains many gaps in tree cover. Trees are also located along the Kensington Expressway corridor embankments south of Girard Place. The view of trees south of Girard Place is largely due to the Kensington Expressway being depressed relative to the adjoining topography. Viewsheds are primarily from the streets and the residences that line the Humboldt Parkway.

### **5.2.2 Landscape Unit #2: Urban Open Space - Institutional**

The Urban Open Space - Institutional Landscape Unit includes open space and institutional uses interspersed with residential areas located in the southern portion of the AVE. The open space and institutional uses include Martin Luther King Jr. Park and the Buffalo Museum of Science/ Public School 59 Charles R. Drew Science Magnet School. Landscape Unit #2 also includes residential areas interspersed with open space and institutional uses. Viewers in this landscape unit include pedestrians and bicyclists, motoring, touring and commuting travelers, and residential and institutional neighbors. The Kensington Expressway is visible from several ground-level areas of this landscape unit. The Buffalo Museum of Science has prominent elevated views of the Kensington Expressway.

### **5.2.3 Landscape Unit #3: Transportation Corridor**

The Transportation Corridor Landscape Unit includes transportation land uses throughout the length of the AVE. This landscape unit includes the Kensington Expressway as well as bridges overhead and on/off ramps. Viewers in this landscape unit include motoring, touring, shipping, and commuting travelers. The Kensington Expressway as well as bridges and ramps dominate the focus of travelers within the landscape unit. The Kensington Expressway is depressed for



much of the length of the AVE, rising to street level gradually in the northern portion of the AVE, and therefore, the visual character for travelers along the Kensington Expressway is dominated by the visual qualities associated with transportation infrastructure. Peripheral views of vegetation and concrete walls are of relatively minimal effect due to the focus of attention of the viewer in the direction of travel. For the motorists traveling along the expressway itself, a coherent composition is provided by a dominant focus on roadway organization and traffic. The dominance of transportation infrastructure is evident.

## 6. AFFECTED POPULATION

The inventory phase of a VIA defines the existing status of the affected environment and affected population and the existing or preferred condition of visual quality. The inventory phase helps generate the baseline conditions from which visual impacts can be assessed. A part of the inventory phase includes the refinement and examination of landscape units by identifying the visual character of the visual resources that compose each landscape type.

The population affected by the proposed Project is referred to as viewers. Viewers are defined by their relationship to the proposed Project and their visual preferences. Visual quality is a result of the interactive experience between viewers and their environment. Visual quality is determined by a viewer's preference for natural harmony, cultural order, and project coherence. Further description of these terms of visual preference, as described in Section 5.4 of the FHWA's Guidelines, are as follows:

- **Natural Harmony:** When viewing the components of a scene's natural harmony, viewers inherently evaluate the natural harmony of the existing scene, determining if the composition is harmonious or inharmonious. The perception of natural harmony can be determined by viewing the character of the visual resources of the natural environment through the lens of viewer preferences. Viewers have a concept of what constitutes natural harmony. The greater the degree to which the natural visual resources of the AVE/landscape units meet the viewer's preferred concept of natural harmony, the higher the value the viewer places on those visual resources.
- **Cultural Order:** When viewing the components of the cultural environment, viewers evaluate the scene's cultural order, determining if the composition is orderly or disorderly. Similar to natural harmony, the perception of cultural order can be determined by viewing the character of the visual resources of the cultural environment through the lens of viewer preferences. Viewers have a concept of what constitutes cultural order. The greater the degree to which the visual resources of the AVE/landscape unit meet the viewer's preferred concept of cultural order, the higher the value the viewer places on those visual resources.
- **Project Coherence:** When viewing the project coherence, viewers evaluate the coherence of the project components, determining if the composition is coherent or incoherent. Similar to the evaluation of natural harmony and cultural order, the perception of project coherence can be determined by viewing the character of the visual resources of the project environment through the lens of the viewer preferences. Viewers have a concept of what constitutes project cohesion. The greater the degree to which the visual



resources of the project environment meet the viewer's preferred concept of project coherence, the higher the value the viewer places on those visual resources.

## **6.1 Viewer Groups**

In accordance with FHWA Guidelines for VIA of Highway Projects, viewer groups are broken down into two categories: travelers (those who have views from the Kensington Expressway or Humboldt Parkway) and neighbors (those who have views of the Kensington Expressway or Humboldt Parkway). Categories are then subdivided into the mode of a traveler or the specific land use of a neighbor to further define the different preferences represented within the AVE.

### **6.1.1. Travelers**

Five types of travelers were identified within the AVE: motoring, pedestrian and bicycling, touring, shipping, and commuting travelers.

#### **Motoring Travelers**

The Kensington Expressway, Humboldt Parkway, and local road motorists are the largest viewer group within the AVE. Motorists view the Project from the road, typically in a dynamic mode while moving. Motorists driving on the Kensington Expressway travel both northerly and southerly to their intended destinations. This viewer group consists of motorists traveling the transportation corridor on the Kensington Expressway or using it to access or egress destinations within the Study Area. Motorists on Humboldt Parkway and other local roads are also included in this group. The posted speed limit for the Kensington Expressway is 55 mph and 30 mph on the Humboldt Parkway and local roads. On the Kensington Expressway, speeds can be below the speed limit during periodic congestion events. Viewer exposure may be high due to slow speeds as a result of congestion and the number of highway users and trips. Viewer activity consists of either driving or being a passenger in a vehicle. For drivers, viewer awareness may be moderate, while for passengers, viewer awareness may be high. Motorists traveling in and along the transportation corridor through residential or commercial areas have low exposure to visual changes in the environment due to limited visibility and short viewer duration. Therefore, overall, motorists have relatively low to moderate sensitivity to detailed visual changes within the transportation corridor.

#### **Pedestrian and Bicycling Travelers**

Pedestrians and bicyclists are more aware of changes in the visual environment than motorists, as they travel at much slower speeds and are not constrained by a vehicle. However, this group is smaller in number than vehicular travelers. Pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited on the Kensington Expressway; however, views may be affected from the adjacent Humboldt Parkway or when crossing over bridges. This viewer group also includes pedestrians walking on the sidewalks in the residential communities along Humboldt Parkway. Pedestrians move at a slower rate than all other travelers. They have a slight preference for cultural order over natural harmony and project coherence. Bicyclists travel at greater speeds than pedestrians but still slower than motorized travel. Bicyclists have a slight preference for project coherence over cultural order and natural harmony. Like motorists, overall, pedestrians and bicyclists have relatively moderate sensitivity to detailed visual changes within the transportation corridor.

### **Shipping Travelers**

Shipping travelers use the Kensington Expressway primarily to move goods. The type of vehicle and the distance traveled vary. The Kensington Expressway serves as a truck route between downtown Buffalo and the surrounding region; however, Interstate 190 (I-190) serves as the primary route for shipping to or from downtown Buffalo. Shipping travelers utilizing the Kensington Expressway are not limited to the expressway and may use the off-ramps to access Humboldt Parkway and other roads when shipping to local neighborhood destinations. Most shipping travel is routine, and their primary interest lies in project coherence, cultural order, and natural harmony to help them arrive at destinations for delivery and pick-up purposes. This viewer group has a low sensitivity to visual change.

### **Touring Travelers**

Tourists are those people traveling on a highway for tourism reasons, usually to a pre-determined destination. These types of trips tend to be more adventuresome, cover longer distances, and take more time than commuting trips. Touring travelers frequently are traveling in groups with both a driver and passengers. This viewer group includes those traveling to and from Buffalo Niagara International Airport, by private vehicle, taxi, or rental car. Touring travelers are equally interested in project coherence, cultural order, and natural harmony. This viewer group has a low sensitivity to visual change.

### **Commuting Travelers**

Commuting travelers are motorists who utilize the Kensington Expressway on a regular basis to commute to their place of work. These travelers are regular travelers of the same route. The frequency of the travel may vary, but there may be peak times such as mornings and evenings. Most trips occur in urban areas between home and work. Commuters, like all travelers, favor project coherence and are interested in cultural order and natural harmony to the extent that it contributes to wayfinding. This viewer group has a moderate sensitivity to visual change.

## **6.1.2. Neighbors**

As defined in the FHWA's Guidelines, the term "neighbor" does not always mean that a person is adjacent to the roadway. Rather, it refers to people who are not traveling on the roadway but may see it from their geographic location in the AVE. Neighbors were further subdivided into residential (those who live adjacent to the Project area), institutional (including school employees and students), commercial and recreational. The AVE primarily consists of residential land uses, along with parks, institutions/community facilities and commercial uses.

### **Residential Neighbors**

Residential users tend to be permanent and have a desire to maintain their surrounding landscape as is. Residential users are interested in cultural order and natural harmony with less emphasis on project coherence. Residents may view the Kensington Expressway from their homes' front and back yards, local roads, and the Humboldt Parkway (sidewalks and roads themselves). Several residential neighborhoods are within and adjacent to the AVE, including Hamlin Park, Masten Park, Delavan-Grider, MLK Park, the Fruit Belt, and Broadway-Fillmore. Neighborhood residents in and around the transportation corridor have a prolonged view of the roadway and the

surrounding landscape, and therefore, have a high sensitivity to visual change. Their exposure level to the area is high, as these residents have frequent and repeated visual exposure.

### **Institutional Neighbors**

Institutional neighbors provide or receive services from a variety of institutions such as schools, hospitals, or social/public service facilities. The Buffalo Museum of Science is adjacent to the transportation corridor. Sensitive viewer groups consist primarily of museum employees (who tend to be present for longer durations), and visitors (who are more transitory). As described in Section 4.2 of the DDR/EA, there are schools, places of worship, and other community facilities in the vicinity of the Project. There are eight schools in the area, five of which are for kindergarten up to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. There are 27 places of worship in the area, primarily of the Christian faith. There are also several social services organizations, healthcare centers, and public safety offices in the area. Institutions often want to express a public face to travelers adjacent to their facilities for a variety of reasons. The presentation of their buildings and grounds is critical to the impression they are trying to convey, and they often prefer to maintain or improve these impressions or to extend the duration of the views of their buildings and grounds to travelers. Orientation and wayfinding are also critical issues, requiring coordination between transportation and institutional officials. The institutional neighbor's primary interest is in cultural order, but depending on location, they may have equal interest in natural harmony. Project coherence can be critical. Overall, institutional neighbors have a high sensitivity to visual change.

### **Commercial Neighbors**

Commercial neighbors include people who occupy or use office buildings, warehouses, and other commercial structures. Commercial neighbors are relatively uncommon in the AVE. One example of a commercial neighbor is the Gayles Professional Center at 840 Humboldt Parkway. In general, public presentation is important to commercial neighbors and they have a strong preference for project coherence and cultural order. This viewer group has a moderate sensitivity to visual change.

### **Recreational Neighbors**

Recreational neighbors provide or participate in recreation within the AVE. Those who supply a recreational service for others are sometimes permanent while visitors are consumers of the recreational service and are more transitory. The visual preferences of recreational neighbors tend to be more focused on and associated with their recreational activity. Neighbors prefer the status quo and are cautious of visual encroachments that may cause adverse effects on the setting of their activity. However, they may show willingness to entertain improvements to visual resources that enhance their recreational experience. Dependent on the type of recreation, recreational neighbors are interested in cultural order and natural order with some emphasis on project coherence as it can affect their experience traveling to their recreational activity. Recreational neighbors have a high sensitivity to visual change. This viewer group consists of visitors to Martin Luther King Jr. Park as well as the Scajaquada Creek Trail and the three grassy medians and landscaped traffic circle within the AVE.

## 6.2 Visual Quality

Visual quality is a result of the interactive experience between viewers and their environment. When different viewer groups evaluate the visual environment, an opinion is formed regarding how visual resources are valued.

In accordance with the FHWA Guidelines, the descriptions of viewer preferences in this document are standard assumptions of the viewers' visual preferences based on why people have chosen to occupy a certain location using the professional observational approach per Section 5.4.2 of FHWA's Guidelines for VIA of Highway Projects. Refer to Section 6.1, Viewer Groups, for a description of these standard assumptions for each of the Project's user groups.

## 6.3 Viewpoints

Nineteen (19) views were chosen to represent the change in visual quality that would result from the Build Alternative (see Table 1 and Figure 7). Selection of viewpoint locations considered the affected population's sensitivity to the proposed visual changes of the Build Alternative as well as locations with the potential for the most contrast between the Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative and Build Alternative. Visual quality was assessed to evaluate the effects of the Build Alternative. These locations and selection of views are described below.

**Viewpoint 1:** View looking north from the eastbound direction of the Kensington Expressway toward the proposed south tunnel portal. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a vehicle perspective in the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 3.

**Viewpoint 2:** View looking north from the roof classroom of the Buffalo Museum of Science toward Humboldt Parkway. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impacts for the museum visitor at an elevated vantage point. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 2.

**Viewpoint 3:** View from the existing pedestrian bridge south of Northland Avenue looking south toward the north tunnel portal. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of those using the pedestrian bridge / Scajaquada Trail within the vicinity of the northern tunnel portal. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 3.

**Viewpoint 4:** View looking southeast from the corner of Northampton Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a pedestrian or vehicle perspective. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 2.

**Viewpoint 5:** Driver view along Kensington Expressway heading eastbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact of a vehicle view in the Landscape Unit 3.

**Viewpoint 6:** View looking east from Riley Street toward Humboldt Parkway southbound and the proposed median. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a vehicle perspective adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 7:** View looking north from Humboldt Parkway northbound at Landon Street. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view from the point of view of a bicyclist in the location of the proposed bike lane on Humboldt Parkway (which is shifted west from the existing bike lane). This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1

**Viewpoint 8:** View looking north from the corner of Landon Street and Humboldt Parkway northbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view from the perspective of a bicyclist in the location of the existing bicycle lane on Humboldt Parkway northbound. In the proposed future condition, this would be a pedestrian view due to the bicycle lane location being shifted to the west. Considered together, Viewpoints 7 and 8 illustrate how the location of the bicycle lane would change and the change in the bicyclist view. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 9:** View looking due south from the corner of East Utica Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound. This viewpoint was selected to show potential visual impact from the perspective of a pedestrian, vehicle, or residence adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 10:** View looking due north from the East Utica Street bridge at the Kensington Expressway. This viewpoint was selected to show potential visual impact from the perspective of a pedestrian, vehicle, or residence adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 3.

**Viewpoint 11:** View looking northeast from the East Utica Street bridge toward residential and institutional buildings. This viewpoint was selected to show potential visual impact from the perspective of a pedestrian, vehicle, or residence adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 3.

**Viewpoint 12:** View looking northwest from in front of 840 Humboldt Parkway northbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a residence adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 13:** View looking south from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway northbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a pedestrian or residence view adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 14:** View looking east from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway southbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a pedestrian or residence view adjacent to the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 15:** View looking southwest from Best Street and West Parade Avenue which is also the West Parade Circle entrance to Martin Luther King Park. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle perspective in the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 2.

**Viewpoint 16:** View looking northeast from Best Street and the westbound on-ramp onto the Kensington Expressway. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view

of potential visual impact from a pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle perspective in the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 17:** View looking north from in front of 746 Humboldt Parkway northbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a pedestrian perspective in the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 18:** View looking south from the corner of Brunswick Boulevard and Humboldt Parkway southbound. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of potential visual impact from a pedestrian, residence, or vehicle perspective in the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 1.

**Viewpoint 19:** View looking south from the shoulder of Kensington Expressway eastbound toward the proposed north tunnel portal. This viewpoint was selected to show a representative view of the northern end of the transportation corridor. This viewpoint is located in Landscape Unit 3.

**Table 1: Viewpoints**

Viewpoint No.	Viewer Groups	Viewpoint Description	Landscape Unit	Description of Proposed Conditions
1	Traveling: motoring, shipping, touring, commuting	View looking north from the eastbound direction of Kensington Expressway	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the south tunnel portal, continuation of the Kensington Expressway walls and landscaping to the sides, and trees along Humboldt Parkway and on the parkway median.
2	Neighbor: institutional, recreational	View looking north from the roof classroom of the Buffalo Museum of Science toward Humboldt Parkway	2-Urban Open Space - Institutional	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the south end of the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
3	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists	View from the existing pedestrian bridge south of Northland Avenue looking south toward the north tunnel portal.	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the northern tunnel portal, the beginning of the treed Humboldt Parkway median and streetscape changes to Humboldt Parkway to the south.
4	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking southeast from the corner of Northampton Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.	2-Urban Open Space - Institutional	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the addition of the northbound single access lane, and the southern end of the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
5	Traveling: motoring, shipping, touring, commuting	Driver view along Kensington Expressway heading eastbound.	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the inside of the tunnel.

Table 1: Viewpoints

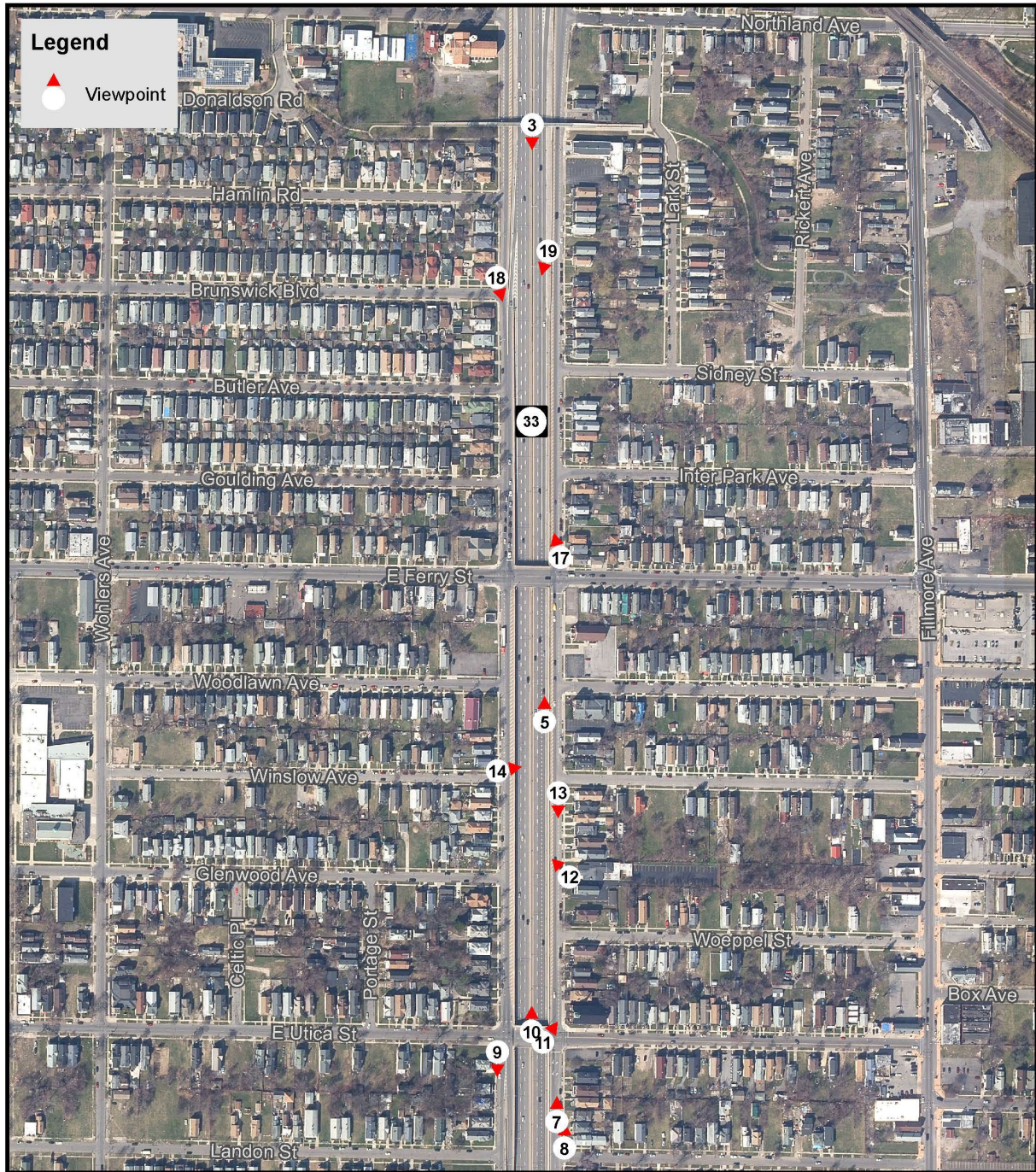
Viewpoint No.	Viewer Groups	Viewpoint Description	Landscape Unit	Description of Proposed Conditions
6	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking east from Riley Street toward Humboldt Parkway southbound and the proposed median.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the addition of the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
7	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking north from Humboldt Parkway northbound at Landon Street.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the addition of the roadway single lane, bicycle lane, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
8	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking north from the corner of Landon Street and Humboldt Parkway northbound.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the addition of the roadway single lane, bicycle lane, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
9	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking due south from the corner of East Utica Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the addition of the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
10	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking due north from the East Utica Street bridge at the Kensington Expressway.	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway and the addition of the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
11	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking northeast from the East Utica Street bridge toward residential and institutional buildings.	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway, the treed Humboldt Parkway median foreground and the new Humboldt Parkway northbound beyond.
12	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking northwest from in front of 840 Humboldt Parkway northbound	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway, the reconstructed Humboldt Parkway and snow storage lawn area, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
13	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking south from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway northbound.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway, the reconstructed Humboldt Parkway and snow storage lawn area, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
14	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking east from Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway southbound.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over the Kensington Expressway, the reconstructed Humboldt Parkway and snow storage lawn area, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.

Table 1: Viewpoints

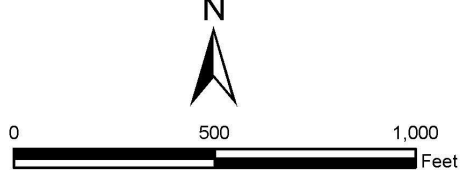
Viewpoint No.	Viewer Groups	Viewpoint Description	Landscape Unit	Description of Proposed Conditions
15	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, shipping, commuter, touring Neighbor: residents, recreational	View looking southwest from Best Street and West Parade Avenue which is also the West Parade Circle entrance to Martin Luther King Jr. Park.	2-Urban Open Space – Institutional	Shows the roundabout and snow storage lawn areas, sidewalks, and landscaping.
16	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, shipping commuter, touring Neighbor: residents, commercial	View looking northeast from Best Street and the westbound on-ramp onto the Kensington Expressway.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the new 'peanut' roundabout and snow storage lawn areas, sidewalks and landscaping.
17	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking north from in front of 746 Humboldt Parkway northbound.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the capping over of the Kensington Expressway, the reconstructed Humboldt Parkway and snow storage lawn area, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
18	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists Neighbor: residents	View looking south from the corner of Brunswick Boulevard and Humboldt Parkway southbound.	1-Urban Neighborhood – Residential	Shows the proposed north tunnel entrance, the capping over of the Kensington Expressway, the reconstructed Humboldt Parkway and snow storage lawn area, and the treed Humboldt Parkway median.
19	Traveling: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, shipping, commuter, touring Neighbor: residents	View looking south from the shoulder of the Kensington Expressway eastbound toward the proposed north tunnel portal.	3-Transportation Corridor	Shows the proposed north tunnel portal, the Kensington Expressway walls and landscaping to the sides, and trees above and to the sides on the Humboldt Parkway and median.

See associated photo simulations for each viewpoint in Section 6.3.1.





**Figure 7a**  
**Viewpoints Map**



Source: LaBella 2023, NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2021-2022.

PIN 5512.52  
NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY





**Figure 7b**  
**Viewpoints Map**

N  
0 500 1,000  
Feet  
Source: LaBella 2023, NYSGIS Clearinghouse 2021-2022.

PIN 5512.52  
NYS Route 33, Kensington Expressway Project  
Erie County, NY

### 6.3.1 Potential Effects

The following section provides a visual representation of the Build Alternative as compared to the No Build Alternative using photo simulations to evaluate visual impact. The simulations referenced in this section were created by modeling proposed features using MicroStation InRoads visual modeling software and overlaying the model onto existing imagery using Lumion 3D rendering software and Adobe Photoshop. The visualizations are representative of preliminary design and will be updated, if necessary, during final design.

To evaluate the level of visual impact under the Build Alternative, the changes to the environment (measured by the compatibility of the impact and change in visual quality) and to viewers (measured by sensitivity) were analyzed. The compatibility of the project environment is defined as compatible or incompatible by analyzing any proposed contrasts to the existing scale, form, materials, and visual character. The sensitivity of viewers is defined by analyzing the viewer's exposure (proximity, extent, and duration) and awareness (attention, focus, and protection) of any changes in the visual character of visual resources. Visual quality is the interaction between the visible landscape and the viewers.



Viewpoint 1

Figure 9. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 1 – Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking north from the eastbound direction of the Kensington Expressway toward the proposed south tunnel portal.

Figure 10. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 1 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 9)

This photo was taken looking north from the eastbound direction of the Kensington Expressway toward the proposed south tunnel portal. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by transportation infrastructure, including the Dodge Street bridge, the Kensington Expressway, and the Northampton bridge beyond. To the left (northwest), a retaining wall and mature trees line the Humboldt Parkway southbound. Residential homes can be seen in the background, through the mature trees. To the right (northeast), the view also shows vegetation, lawn, and mature trees along the Kensington Expressway on-ramp from Dodge Street. Traveler groups experiencing this view would be motoring, shipping, touring and commuting travelers using the expressway. There are no neighbor groups experiencing this view. The viewpoint is compatible and traveler group viewer sensitivity is low, as views from this viewpoint are of a short duration.

### Build Alternative (Figure 10)

Under the Build Alternative, trees would be removed along Humboldt Parkway southbound and along the right (east side) as new ramps are constructed. Bridge abutments and retaining walls will become more visible. The retaining walls along both sides will be replaced, creating a greater sense of delineation for motorists. For most motorists, whose sensitivity would be low due to their focus on the road, the tunnel entrance will be prominent due to the motorists' proximity but will only be seen briefly. While trees along both sides of the corridor will be removed resulting in a moderate visual change, new trees will be added above the tunnel and on both sides of Humboldt Parkway northbound and southbound. Given the dominance of transportation infrastructure at this viewpoint, the Build Alternative would have a low degree of visual change, would be compatible with the existing view, and would have a neutral impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 2

Figure 11. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 2 – Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking north from the roof classroom of the Buffalo Museum of Science toward Humboldt Parkway.

Figure 12. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 2 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 11)

This photo was taken from the roof-top classroom and activity area of the Buffalo Museum of Science. The existing visual quality is moderate because the view is from a high vantage point and takes in a large area of the neighborhood with the Kensington Expressway playing a minor role in the view. In the foreground, Northampton Street and the museum entrance plaza are in view and residential homes can be seen to the right (northeast) and to the left (northwest). There are no traveler groups that would experience this view. Neighbor groups that would experience this view are institutional (museum employees) and recreational (museum visitors). This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 12)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground, midground and background including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a highly positive change to the view. The museum groups that will experience the changes for a short to moderate duration, will see this positive change. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 3

Figure 13. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 3 – Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)

View from the existing pedestrian bridge south of Northland Avenue looking south toward the proposed north tunnel portal.



Figure 14. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 3 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.



### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 13)

This photo was taken looking south from the pedestrian bridge over the Kensington Expressway toward the proposed north tunnel portal. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by transportation infrastructure, including the East Ferry Street bridge, the Kensington Expressway, and the Humboldt Parkway both northbound and southbound. To the right (southwest), retaining walls, concrete barriers, and mature trees line the Humboldt Parkway southbound and residential homes can be seen amongst the trees and vegetation. To the left (southeast), the view is dominated by the transportation infrastructure. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be pedestrians and bicyclists using the bridge to cross the expressway. The viewpoint is compatible and viewer group sensitivity is high, as viewers are relatively slower moving and views from this viewpoint are of a longer duration.

### Build Alternative (Figure 14)

Under the Build Alternative, the new tunnel entrance will maintain transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground. Bridge abutments and retaining walls will remain visible. The retaining walls along both sides will be replaced with larger retaining walls due to the increased depth of the highway in this location. Removal of trees and vegetation along Humboldt Parkway southbound will be minimal resulting in a low visual change. New trees and landscaping would be added above the tunnel and on both sides of Humboldt Parkway where none exist now, resulting in a positive change in the view. Pedestrians using the bridge will continue to experience this view and sensitivity to view quality is high. Given the dominance of transportation infrastructure within this view, the Build Alternative would have a low degree of visual change, would be compatible with the existing view, and would have a minor beneficial impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 4

Figure 15. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 4 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking southeast from the corner of Northampton Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.

Figure 16. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 4 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 15)

This photo was taken from the northwest corner of Northampton Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound looking southeast toward the Buffalo Museum of Science. The existing visual quality is low-moderate because the foreground and midground of the view is dominated by asphalt pavement and Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure, the Northampton Street bridge in the center and Humboldt Parkway southbound roadway in the foreground. Beyond, the museum building and surrounding trees and vegetation can be seen. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists on Northampton Street and Humboldt Parkway. Neighbor groups including residents would experience this view. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 16)

Under the Build Alternative, the roadway width will be reduced and the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. Street trees will be added to the realigned Humboldt Parkway southbound as well as wider snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a positive change to the view. Traveler group, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, will see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents will experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

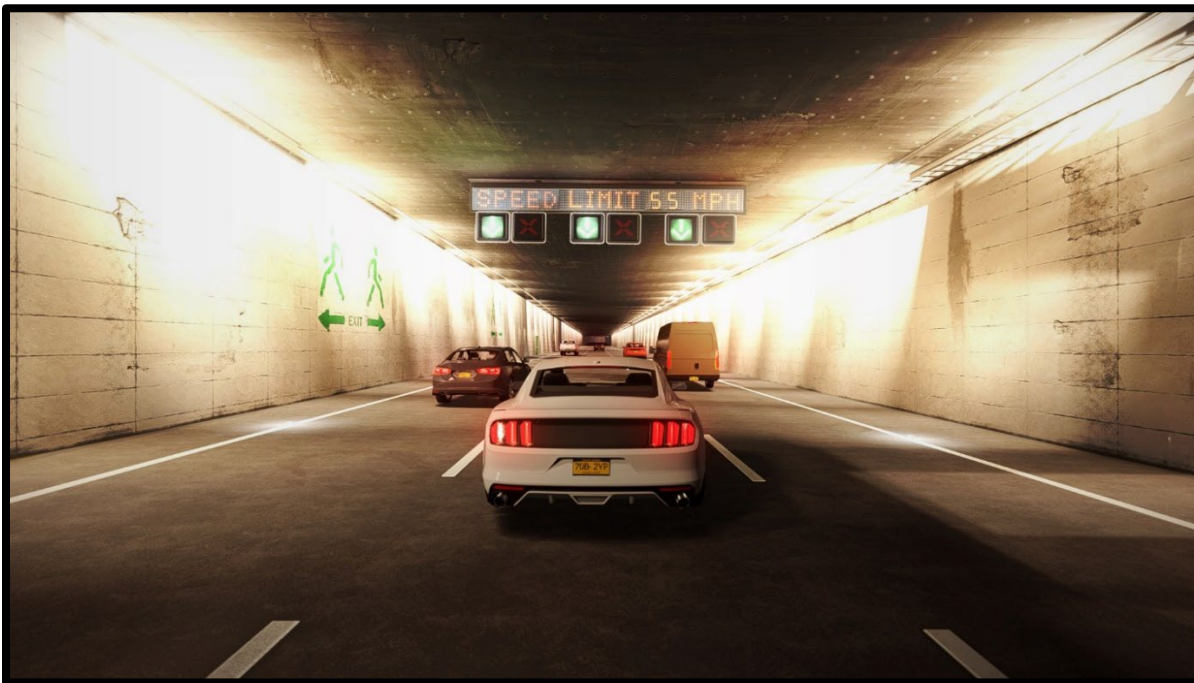
Viewpoint 5

Figure 17. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 5 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)

Driver view along Kensington Expressway heading eastbound.



Figure 18. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 5 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 17)

This photo is a driver view travelling in the eastbound direction of the Kensington Expressway near East Ferry Street. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by transportation infrastructure, including the East Ferry Street bridge, and the Kensington Expressway. To the left (northwest), some existing neighborhood buildings and residential homes can be seen amongst the trees and vegetation. To the right (northeast), the view is dominated by the large concrete retaining wall. Traveling groups experiencing this view on the expressway would be motoring, shipping, commuter and touring travelers. There are no neighbor groups that would experience this view. Traveler group viewer sensitivity is low, as views from this viewpoint are of a short duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 18)

Under the Build Alternative, the proposed tunnel surrounds the view and transportation infrastructure including the roadway, walls, and lighting would be prominent in the foreground and beyond. The loss of visibility of trees and vegetation along Humboldt Parkway southbound will be minimal resulting in a low visual change. Traveler groups experiencing this view are motoring, shipping, touring and commuting travelers. For travelers, the viewpoint is compatible and traveler group viewer sensitivity is low, as views from this viewpoint are of a short duration. Given the dominance of transportation infrastructure within proximity of this view, the Build Alternative would have a moderate degree of visual change, would be compatible with the existing view, and would have a neutral impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 6

Figure 19. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 6 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking east from Riley Street toward Humboldt Parkway southbound and the proposed median.

Figure 20. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 6 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 19)

This photo was taken from the centerline of Riley Street just west of Humboldt Parkway southbound looking due east. The existing visual quality is moderate to low because the view is dominated by roadway, sidewalks, guiderail, and Kensington Expressway retaining walls, but moderated in visual quality by the visibility of residences and associated landscaping in the midground to background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists on Riley Street. Neighbor groups experiencing this view would be residents on Riley Street. Neighbor group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration. This group is also very concerned with quality of views.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 20)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and to the left and right, snow storage/ tree lawn areas and more trees will be in view. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a highly positive change to the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, will see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 7

Figure 21. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 7 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking north from Humboldt Parkway northbound at Landon Street.

Figure 22. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 7 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.



#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 21)

This photo was taken on Humboldt Parkway northbound at Landon Street looking north. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure to the left (west), East Utica Street bridge in the center and Humboldt Parkway northbound roadway in the foreground. To the right (northeast), some vegetation and residential homes as well as an attractive church can be seen. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists and motorists on Humboldt Parkway northbound. Pedestrians would also experience this view but from a slightly different angle. Neighbor groups including residents would experience this view but from a slightly different angle. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 22)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The \*existing transportation infrastructure including curbs, sidewalks, retaining walls, and asphalt would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes would result in a positive change to the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 8

Figure 23. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 8 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking north from the corner of Landon Street and Humboldt Parkway northbound.

Figure 24. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 8 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 21)

This photo was taken from the corner of Landon Street and Humboldt Parkway northbound looking north. The existing visual quality is low to moderate because the view is dominated by Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure to the left (west), East Utica Street bridge in the center and Humboldt Parkway northbound roadway in the foreground. To the right (northeast), some vegetation and residential homes as well as an attractive church can be seen. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be pedestrians. Other traveling groups such as bicyclists and motorists on Humboldt Parkway northbound would experience this view but from a slightly different angle. Neighbor groups including residents would be experiencing this view but from a slightly different angle. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

### Build Alternative (Figure 22)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing, and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure including curbs, sidewalks, retaining walls, and asphalt would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes would result in a positive change to the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view will be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a highly positive impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 9

Figure 25. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 9 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking due south from the corner of East Utica Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.

Figure 26. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 9 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 25)

This photo was taken from the corner of East Utica Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound looking due south. The existing visual quality is moderate to low because the view is dominated by roadway, guiderail, and Kensington Expressway ramp to the left (southeast) but moderated in visual quality by the visibility of residences and associated landscaping to the right (west) and in the foreground to background. To the right (west), vegetation and residential homes can be seen. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists on Humboldt Parkway, but each from a slightly different angle. Neighbor groups including residents would be experiencing this view but from a slightly different angle. Neighbor group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration. This group is also very concerned with quality of views.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 26)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median to the left (east) and snow storage/ tree lawn areas and more trees to the right (west) of the view. The cumulative effect of these changes would result in a positive change to the view. Traveler group, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 10

Figure 27. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 10 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking due north from the East Utica Street bridge at the Kensington Expressway.

Figure 28. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 10 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.



#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 27)

This photo was taken looking due north from the East Utica Street bridge toward the proposed median. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in full view including bridge walls and chain link fencing, retaining walls, and the expressway below. To the left (west) and right (east) some vegetation and residential homes can be seen in the midground/background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists on East Utica Street. Neighbor groups such as residents would experience this view from a slightly different angle and greater distance. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 28)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes would result in a positive change to the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents and recreational users (now able to use the new median) would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 11

Figure 29. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 11 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking northeast from the East Utica Street bridge toward residential and institutional buildings.

Figure 30. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 11 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 29)

This photo was taken looking northeast from the East Utica Street bridge toward the proposed median and the intersection of East Utica Street and Humboldt Parkway northbound. The existing visual quality is low to moderate because the view is co-dominated first by Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in view to the left (north) including bridge walls and chain link fencing, and retaining walls, and second by the church building visible to the right. Some vegetation and residential homes can also be seen in the midground/background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists on East Utica Street. Neighbor groups including residents would be experiencing this view but from a different angle. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

### Build Alternative (Figure 30)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes would result in a highly positive change in the view. Traveler group, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents and recreational users (now able to use the new median greenspace) will experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 12

Figure 31. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 12 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking northwest from in front of 840 Humboldt Parkway northbound.

Figure 32. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 12 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 31)

This photo was taken looking northwest from in front of 840 Humboldt Parkway northbound toward the proposed median. The existing visual quality is low to moderate because the view is dominated by pavement and the Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure including guiderails, fencing, and retaining walls visible in the foreground. The severity of the view is moderated by the residential buildings, trees and landscaping in the background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists on Humboldt Parkway northbound. Neighbor groups including residents would experience this view. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 32)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a positive change in the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 13

Figure 33. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 13 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking south from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway northbound.

Figure 34. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 13 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.



### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 33)

This photo was taken looking due south from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway northbound. The existing visual quality is moderate because the view is dominated by residential properties, front yards, landscaping, and trees. To the right (southwest) transportation infrastructure of the Kensington Expressway can be seen in the midground as well as more residential buildings and trees in the background. Traveling groups including pedestrians would be experiencing this view. Other traveling groups including bicyclists and motorists would experience this view when on Winslow Avenue near Humboldt Parkway northbound. Neighbor groups including residents would be experiencing this view. This group's viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

### Build Alternative (Figure 34)

Under the Build Alternative, snow storage/tree lawn areas would be expanded and more dominant in the view. The existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a positive change in the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the view and the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 14

Figure 35. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 14 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking east from Winslow Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.

Figure 36. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 14 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 35)

This photo was taken looking east from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway southbound toward the proposed median. The existing visual quality is low to moderate because the view is dominated by pavement and the Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure including guiderails, fencing, and retaining walls are visible in the foreground. The severity of the view is moderated by the church and residential buildings, trees, and landscaping in the background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists on Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway southbound. Neighbor groups including residents would be experiencing this view. This group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 36)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and snow storage/ tree lawn areas. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a positive change in the view. Traveler groups including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 15

Figure 37. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 15 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking southwest from Best Street and West Parade Avenue which is also the West Parade Circle entrance to Martin Luther King Jr. Park.

Figure 38. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 15 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 37)

This photo was taken looking southwest from the corner of Best Street and West Parade Avenue which is also the entrance to West Parade Circle at Martin Luther King Jr. Park. The viewpoint is toward the proposed roundabout. The existing visual quality is moderate because the view is dominated by lawn, trees, and light poles in the foreground, pavement and associated appurtenances visible in the midground and lastly by an attractive, historic church in the background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists on Best Street, West Parade Avenue and West Parade Circle. Other traveling groups including shipping, commuter and touring are likely to experience this view since this viewpoint is close to the NYS Route 33 full interchange at Best Street, and also close to Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Residents using the sidewalks will experience this view including neighbor groups such as recreational users of Martin Luther King Jr. Park (located nearby).

#### Build Alternative (Figure 38)

Under the Build Alternative, the proposed Best Street roundabout would be prominent in the foreground and midground including asphalt pavement, sidewalks, curbing, signage, and other associated improvements. The existing roadway and infrastructure would be replaced by the roundabout, complete with proposed color-tinted concrete pavement and landscaping. A portion of the lawn and trees would be removed to make way for the roundabout. The cumulative effect of the changes will result in a neutral change in the view. Traveler groups including bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this neutral to somewhat positive change. Neighbor groups including recreational park visitors would experience the changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a neutral to positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 16

Figure 39. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 16 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking northeast from Best Street and the westbound on-ramp onto the Kensington Expressway.

Figure 40. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 16 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.



### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 39)

This photo was taken looking northeast from the southwest corner of Best Street and the NYS Route 33 westbound on-ramp onto the Kensington Expressway. The view is toward the proposed 'peanut' roundabout and the new Best Street bridge. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by Best Street and bridge infrastructure in the foreground and midground and only some trees at Martin Luther King Jr. Park in the background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists on Best Street. Due to the close proximity to the NYS Route 33 interchange with Best Street and the Martin Luther King Jr. Park, other travelling groups including shipping, commuter and touring are likely to experience this view. Neighbor groups including commercial and residential would experience this view. This group's viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration.

### Build Alternative (Figure 40)

Under the Build Alternative, the Best Street 'peanut' roundabout would be prominent in the foreground and midground including asphalt pavement, sidewalks, curbing, signage, and other associated improvements. The existing roadway and infrastructure would be replaced by the "peanut" roundabout complete with proposed color-tinted concrete pavement and landscaping. Landscaping is visible on the bridge and in the roundabout. The cumulative effect of the changes will result in a moderately positive change in the view. Traveler groups including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this neutral to somewhat positive change. Neighbor groups including commercial and residential would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a moderately positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 17

Figure 41. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 17 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking north from in front of 746 Humboldt Parkway northbound.

Figure 42. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 17 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 41)

This photo was taken in front of 746 Humboldt Parkway northbound looking north. This location is just north of East Ferry Street. The existing visual quality is low to moderate because the view is dominated by roadway, guiderail, and Kensington Expressway infrastructure to the left, but moderated in visual quality by the visibility of residences, trees and associated landscaping to the right (east) and in the background. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists on Humboldt Parkway northbound. Neighbor groups experiencing this view would be residents on Humboldt Parkway northbound. Neighbor group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration. This group is also very concerned with the quality of views.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 42)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt would not be visible. The existing transportation infrastructure would be replaced by the grassy, treed median to the left (northwest) and wider snow storage/ tree lawn areas and more trees in the center (north) of the view. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a positive change to the view. Traveler groups, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.



Viewpoint 18

Figure 43. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 18 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking south from the corner of Brunswick Boulevard and Humboldt Parkway southbound.

Figure 44. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 18 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.

#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 43)

This photo was taken from the northwest corner of Brunswick Boulevard and Humboldt Parkway southbound looking due south. The existing visual quality is moderate to low because the view is dominated by roadway, guiderail, and the Kensington Expressway ramp to the left (east), but moderated in visual quality by the visibility of residences and associated landscaping to the right (west) and in the background to the left (southeast). To the right (west), vegetation and residential homes can be seen, though there are few street trees. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists on Humboldt Parkway southbound. Neighbor groups experiencing this view would be residents on Humboldt Parkway southbound. Neighbor group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration. This group is also very concerned with quality of views.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 44)

Under the Build Alternative, the existing Kensington Expressway transportation infrastructure in the foreground and midground including concrete walls, guiderails, fencing and asphalt will be somewhat reconfigured but still visible. The transportation infrastructure in the background would be replaced by the grassy, treed parkway median and to the right (west), the snow storage/ tree lawn areas are in view as well as more trees. The cumulative effect of these changes will result in a positive change to the view. Traveler groups such as pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, while experiencing the changes for only a short duration, would see this positive change. Neighbor groups including residents would experience the positive changes for a longer duration. The view would be compatible with the surroundings designated to remain. The Build Alternative would have a positive impact on visual quality.

Viewpoint 19

Figure 45. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 19 - Existing Conditions (No Build Alternative)



View looking south from the shoulder of the Kensington Expressway eastbound toward the proposed north tunnel portal.

Figure 46. Visual Resources: Viewpoint 19 – Visual Simulation of Build Alternative



Note: This simulation is a representation of the Build Alternative in the preliminary design phase. Project elements shown may be updated during final design.



#### Existing Conditions/No Build Alternative (Figure 45)

This photo was taken looking south from the shoulder of the Kensington Expressway eastbound toward the proposed north tunnel portal. The existing visual quality is low because the view is dominated by transportation infrastructure, including the East Ferry Street bridge, the Kensington Expressway, and the Humboldt Parkway both northbound and southbound. To the right (southwest), retaining walls, concrete barriers, and mature trees line the Humboldt Parkway southbound, and residential homes can be seen amongst the trees and vegetation. To the left (southeast), the view is dominated by the transportation infrastructure. Traveling groups experiencing this view would be motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians on Humboldt Parkway, and on the expressway, groups would include motoring, shipping, commuter, and touring travelers. The viewpoint is compatible and traveler group viewer sensitivity is low, as views from this viewpoint are of a short duration. Neighbor groups including residents would experience this view but from farther back. Neighbor group viewer sensitivity is high, as views from this viewpoint are of a long and persistent duration. This group is also very concerned with quality of views.

#### Build Alternative (Figure 46)

Under the Build Alternative, the new north tunnel portal will bring additional transportation infrastructure to the foreground. Bridge abutments and retaining walls will become more visible. The retaining walls along both sides will be replaced with larger retaining walls due to the increased depth of the highway in this location. Removal of trees and vegetation along Humboldt Parkway southbound will be minimal resulting in a low visual change. New trees and landscaping will be added above the tunnel and on both sides of Humboldt Parkway and this would result in a positive change in the view. Given the dominance of transportation infrastructure within proximity of this view, the Build Alternative would have a low degree of visual change, would be compatible with the existing view, and would have a neutral impact on visual quality.

7.3.1 Summary of Potential Effects

The following tables provide a summary of the potential visual effects that have been determined for each of the nineteen viewpoints. The summary is based on the above evaluation that compares the Build Alternative to the No-Build Alternative. Of the nineteen viewpoint evaluations, 16 have been determined to have a beneficial impact to visual quality. Three have been determined to have a neutral impact to visual quality.

<b>Viewpoint 1: View looking north from the eastbound direction of the Kensington Expressway toward the proposed south tunnel portal.</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X		X	X	X					
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
Low		Low		Compatible	Low		Compatible	Neutral	

<b>Viewpoint 2: View looking north from the roof classroom of the Buffalo Museum of Science toward Humboldt Parkway.</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
						X		X	
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Moderate		Compatible	Moderate		Compatible	Beneficial	

<b>Viewpoint 3: View from the existing pedestrian bridge south of Northland Avenue looking south toward the north tunnel portal.</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
	X								
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low		Compatible	Low		Compatible	Minor Beneficial	

Viewpoint 4: View looking southeast from the corner of Northampton Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 5: Driver view along Kensington Expressway heading eastbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X		X	X	X					
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
Low		Low		Compatible	Moderate		Compatible	Neutral	

Viewpoint 6: View looking east from Riley Street toward Humboldt Parkway southbound and the proposed median.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Moderate to Low		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 7: View looking north from Humboldt Parkway northbound at Landon Street									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	



<b>Viewpoint 8: View looking north from the corner of Landon Street and Humboldt Parkway northbound.</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

<b>Viewpoint 9: View looking due south from the corner of East Utica Street and Humboldt Parkway southbound.</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

<b>Viewpoint 10: View looking due north from the East Utica Street bridge at the Kensington Expressway. .</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

<b>Viewpoint 11: View looking northeast from the East Utica Street bridge toward residential and institutional buildings.</b>									
<b>TRAVELER GROUPS</b>					<b>NEIGHBOR GROUPS</b>				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
<b>EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>					<b>BUILD ALTERNATIVE</b>				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 12: View looking northwest from in front of 840 Humboldt Parkway northbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 13: View looking south from the corner of Winslow Avenue and Humboldt Parkway northbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 14: View looking east from the corner of Winslow Street and Humboldt Parkway Southbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 15: View looking southwest from Best Street and West Parade Avenue which is also the West Parade Circle entrance to Martin Luther King Jr. Park.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X	X	X	X	X			X	
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
Moderate-High		Moderate		Compatible	Moderate		Compatible	Minor Beneficial	

Viewpoint 16: View looking northeast from Best Street and the westbound on-ramp onto the Kensington Expressway.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
Moderate-High		Low		Compatible	Moderate		Compatible	Minor Beneficial	

Viewpoint 17: View looking north from in front of 746 Humboldt Parkway northbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 18: View looking south from the corner of Brunswick Boulevard and Humboldt Parkway southbound.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X				X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
High		Low to Moderate		Compatible	High		Compatible	Beneficial	

Viewpoint 19: View looking south from the shoulder of the Kensington Expressway eastbound toward the proposed north tunnel portal.									
TRAVELER GROUPS					NEIGHBOR GROUPS				
Motoring	Pedestrian & Bicycling	Touring	Shipping	Commuting	Residential	Institutional	Retail & Commercial	Recreational	Civic
X	X	X	X	X	X				
EXISTING CONDITIONS / NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE					BUILD ALTERNATIVE				
Existing Viewer Sensitivity		Existing Visual Quality		Level of Compatibility	Degree of Visual Change		Level of Compatibility	Impact to Visual quality	
Low to High		Low		Compatible	Low		Compatible	Neutral	



## **7. VISUAL MITIGATION SUMMARY**

No adverse visual effects are anticipated with the implementation of the Build Alternative; therefore, no visual mitigation is required.