Traffic Discussion

Q #1 - How much daily traffic volume is on the Kensington Expressway today?

Approximately 75,000 vehicles per day.

Q #2 - Were new traffic counts collected for the project?

Yes, 72-hour continuous traffic counts were collected for the Kensington mainline in the Fall of 2021. Morning and Evening peak period intersection turning movement counts were collected for 62 adjacent local area intersections. The 2021 counts were adjusted and balanced using pre-COVID historical data from NYSDOT as a reference point.

Q #3 - Was traffic redistributed from the Kensington for the various concepts?

Yes, the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council) utilized their regional travel demand model to determine redistributed traffic patterns which were then analyzed to identify traffic impacts within the Kensington project area.

Q #4 - Was a traffic volume growth factor applied for future scenarios?

Yes, the NYSDOT identified an annualized growth factor of 0.25%/year for the project to account for new development and re-development of existing properties.

Q #5 - Will Kensington speeds and/or travel times be impacted by the project?

The Build Alternative (Concept 5/6) maintains the Kensington geometry of 3 lanes in each direction, which would keep speeds and travel times consistent with existing conditions. Other concepts that were considered during scoping would increase travel times and decrease speeds in the Kensington corridor, as well as the surrounding local roadway network.

Q #6 – Can Concept 7 (4-lane Tunnel) meet operational capacity?

Vehicle merging & queuing (congestion) issues would develop east of the NYS Route 198/NYS Route 33 junction in the AM peak westbound direction. Queues would extend approximately two miles to Suffolk Street. Traffic speeds in ETC (2027) would be less than 10 mph.

Existing Westbound:

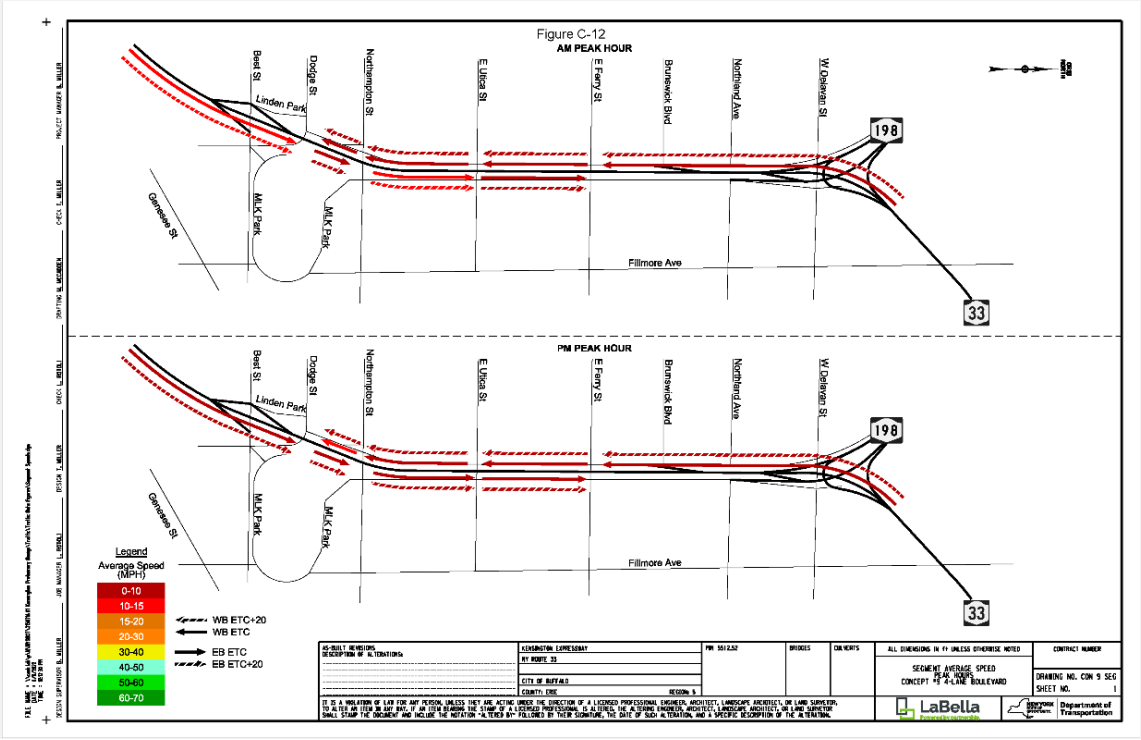
- 4 lanes merge to 3 lanes

Concept 7 Westbound:

- 4 lanes merge to 2 lanes
- Merging congestion
- Queues to Suffolk St.

Q #7 – Can Concept 9 (4-lane at-grade Boulevard) meet operational capacity?

The boulevard concept was analyzed but dismissed due to high traffic volumes, closely spaced intersections, and excessive traffic congestion. Traffic speeds in year 2047 would be less than 10 mph.



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Q #8 What impacts would result from removing the expressway (Concept 10)?

- Redistribute expressway traffic onto local roadways
- Decrease roadway safety with increased vehicular volumes [on local roadways and expressways] and potential increased crashes
- Operational impacts on I-90, I-190, and NYS Route 198
- Need for intersection reconstruction upgrades and potential property takings
- Increased emergency response times
- Potentially reduce air quality with increased vehicular volumes on local roads and intersection stops/starts.

Q #9 - How would E. Utica partial interchange (ramps) closure impact traffic redistribution at the Best Street interchange?

- The E. Utica ramp closures would redistribute traffic to the Best Street interchange. The Best Street interchange ramps would be reconfigured to account for the E. Utica ramp closures and Best Street traffic volumes. Preliminary concepts include adding auxiliary turn lanes for the increased traffic volumes.

Q #10 - How would the local streets be impacted by the Build Alternative (Concept 5/6)?

- The Build Alternative would maintain current local traffic volumes and patterns other than E. Utica ramp closure redistributions to Best Street interchange.
- Improved neighborhood connectivity by re-connecting local street (Riley, Winslow and Sidney/Butler)