

# DOT study found aggressive drivers at Union Road intersection in 2016

By **Jim Herr** - August 8, 2018



State leaders are calling on the DOT to conduct a safety study at Union Road and the Kensington Expressway. (Jim Herr/Cheektowaga Chronicle)

CHEEKTOWAGA – The Cheektowaga Chronicle has learned that a 2016 Department of Transportation safety study determined that aggressive drivers impacted operational issues at the intersection of Union Road and the Kensington Expressway.

The study was prompted by a 2015 letter sent to the DOT by Cheektowaga Councilmember James Rogowski. In his letter, he asked the DOT to make sure that proper signage and crossings were in place to avoid “an accident or death” at the intersection.

“I, personally, witnessed a bicyclist almost being struck while crossing at the entrance lane of the 33 because a car had crossed over two lanes of traffic along Union Road,” Mr. Rogowski wrote. “My assumption was that the driver may not have been familiar with the area and may have been confused as to where the on-ramp was located.”

The DOT responded by letter a few weeks later saying that a traffic engineering investigation was initiated.

DOT spokesperson Susan Surdej tells Cheektowaga Chronicle that DOT Traffic & Safety completed a traffic engineering investigation and reviewed the traffic conditions at the intersection on March 14, 2016.

The investigation reviewed Mr. Rogowski’s request to install pavement markings and signs indicating the proper movement of motor vehicles from each lane. Several field observations were also performed.

“As a result, we found that the pavement [markings] were installed and functioning as designed. Observations indicated that operational issues at the time were a result of aggressive driving rather than a lack of awareness on the part of the drivers, leading to conflict at the intersection. We considered this an enforcement issue and copied the Cheektowaga police of the concern,” Ms. Surdej wrote in an email to Cheektowaga Chronicle.

She says the state installed “ONLY” pavement markings at the existing turn arrows on the bridge to provide additional guidance and to clarify the use of the center lane on the bridge. The installation of the markings was

completed on April 29, 2016.

On Monday, July 30th, 16-year-old Sherilann Lorenz was struck by a car while she was riding her bicycle through the intersection. She died from her injuries two days later. Police determined that the driver did not violate any traffic laws and the bicyclist crossed against traffic. She was also not wearing a helmet.

A new traffic engineering investigation is underway by the DOT at the intersection and the surrounding area as a result of the accident.

*Copyright 2018 Crabapple Media, LLC. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed without prior permission.*

**Send a News Tip to Cheektowaga Chronicle**

**Subscribe to our mailing list below** and read the latest news from Cheektowaga Chronicle in your email every morning at 9 am.

\* indicates required  
Email Address \*

First Name

Last Name

Subscribe