



February 5, 2017

Mr. Jeff South, District Engineer
IDOT District 6
126 E. Ash Street
Springfield, IL 62704

US54 bridge over Mississippi River to Louisiana, Missouri

Dear Mr. South,

Please consider the following input for your 2017-2022 MYP bridge replacement project for the US54 bridge over the Mississippi River to Louisiana, Missouri.

We believe that the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers are the most significant natural barriers to bicycling in Illinois. Many older bridges are very or extremely hazardous for bikes, without safe alternatives for tens of miles. Even where surrounding areas have relatively low bike usage, these rivers' bridge projects' potential to improve non-motorized safety should be maximized.

At present, US54's bridge is hazardous and uncomfortable for even experienced cyclists. It has no shoulders, estimated 10' wide travel lanes, 30mph speed limit, and 3150 ADT traffic count. As seen in Strava's heat map (labs.strava.com/heatmap), showing bike travel by users of that app, an appreciable number of bicyclists still use this bridge – likely due to no nearby options.

We request that bicycles be accommodated in the design of the new bridge. A separated sidepath has been added/planned on some of IDOT's recent major bridge replacements such as this. If it is determined that: a) the lack of development on the Illinois side eliminates the need for pedestrian accommodation, and b) a transition on the Illinois side from sidepath to the existing paved shoulders would be less-than-ideal technically, then paved shoulders would be an appropriate accommodation.

For this traffic count and the likely speed limit, IDOT's pre-2010 BDE Chapter 17's specification called for 6' paved shoulders, which we believe is appropriate. *Note: we would welcome the 8' width from the current specification, but want to convey that 6' is sufficient if it means a higher likelihood of being implemented.*

Working Statewide for Better Bicycling

2550 Cheshire Dr., Aurora, IL 60504
info@rideillinois.org
www.rideillinois.org

We would be glad to discuss these and other project design issues. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Barsotti". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ed Barsotti, Chief Programs Officer, Ride Illinois

Cc: Jon McCormick and Andrew Werner, IDOT