



February 15, 2019

Mr. Kevin Marchek, Region Two Engineer
IDOT District 3
700 E. Norris Dr
Ottawa, IL 61350

IL71 resurfacing project, from LaSalle Co Line to 0.2 Mi W of ILL 47 in Yorkville

Dear Mr. Marchek,

Please consider the following input for your 2019-2024 MYP resurfacing project, cited above.

At present, IL71 ranges from 5950-8500 ADT. The vast majority of the project length consists of paved shoulders of ~5' width, the apparent result of an HSIP safety project that also installed rumble strips. The retrofitted rumbles are unsafe for bicyclists, as identified in our April 25, 2016 email to IDOT District 3 [excerpted]:

A couple years back, paved shoulders with rumble strips were added to most of IL 71 from Ottawa to Yorkville, likely with HSIP funding. It would have been helpful to be able to provide input at that time, as the resulting rumble strips are a problem for bicyclists – and may actually make cycling on IL 71 less safe due to some motorists' expectation that cyclists will move onto the shoulder.

Since the shoulders were newly added to existing pavement, there is a seam between old and new, to the right of the fog line. Because of that seam, the rumbles start considerably further from the fog line than the 4" in the recent rumble strip design detail. The resulting clear zone (free of rumbles) to the right of the rumbles is far less than the 4' recommended by the FHWA – and even less than the 3' that IDOT has used (and Ride Illinois endorses) on some HSIP-funded shoulders having 8" rumbles, 4" from the fog line. In addition, the IL 71 rumbles do not have longitudinal gaps per the design detail.

When opportunities arise to correct the IL 71 rumble strips ... we strongly request that the design detail parameters be implemented by shifting the rumbles left, leaving 3' clear zone and longitudinal gaps.

Working Statewide for Better Bicycling

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This resurfacing project provides just such an opportunity, if the shoulders are included in the resurfacing work. Our recommendation remains to shift the new rumble strips closer to the foglines, following IDOT's design detail of 4" offset, 8" width, with longitudinal breaks. Doing so will result in 4' of clear zone.

[Strava's bicycle heat map](#) gives an indication of which parts of IL71 are most used by those biking and using that smart phone app. These include Pavilion-Legion near Yorkville, Walker Rd.'s jog, N. 41st Rd to the village of Newark, and to a lesser extent, Pavilion-IL47 and the village of Newark to Newark Rd. However, our recommendation is the same throughout the project.

We consider 3' as the minimum clear zone when rumble strips (or fogline rumble *stripes*) are installed. Otherwise, the clear zone is too narrow to be safe, or the shoulder will not be usable at all. We contend that a road with an unusable paved shoulder is less safe for bicyclists than a road with no paved shoulder at all, due to some motorists' incorrect expectations that a cyclist can move to the shoulder when being passed. Besides the safety concern, this also adds to motorist resentment of people riding bikes.

We are glad to discuss these and other project design issues. Thanks 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