



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
LANSING

RICK SNYDER  
GOVERNOR

KIRK T. STEUDLE  
DIRECTOR

October 14, 2013

Mr. John D. Niemela, Director  
County Road Association of Michigan  
417 Seymour, Suite One  
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Mr. Matt Bach, Director of Communications  
Michigan Municipal League  
1675 Green Road  
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105-2530

Dear Mr. Niemela and Mr. Bach:

Subject: Elimination of Open Bridge Railing Special Details: X-30D and X-31A

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is providing this letter to inform you of the transition from open bridge railings to closed bridge railings on local bridge projects.

Due to premature deterioration of concrete deck fascia's and fascia beams, the Local Bridge Program is ending the use of the open bridge railings (Special Detail X-30D and X-31A) in favor of closed railings, which includes railings with brush blocks or solid railings. Exceptions to closed bridge railings will be considered on a case by case basis. Standard bridge railings used by the MDOT are closed railings. Additional costs of MDOT approved railings are minimal to the overall cost of the project and actually provide cost-savings, considering life cycle costs of the structure.

MDOT is committed to long term bridge asset management. Achieving greater longevity and bridge asset preservation by constructing closed bridge railings on local projects will help MDOT continue improving overall statewide bridge condition ratings.

Projects which had Grade Inspections prior to January 1, 2014 would not have to modify their plans and estimates to comply, but are strongly encouraged to consider a closed bridge railing. Starting with the April 4, 2014 letting, all local bridge projects shall use a closed bridge railing, unless granted an exception.

Please feel free to contact Keith Cooper, MDOT Local Agency Bridge Program Manager, at (517) 373-2346, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Larry Doyle, P.E.  
Local Agency Program Manager

BOHD:DSD:KC:kh  
cc: K. Cooper