

TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

- To: Mr. Giancarlo Gierbolini, P.E. District One Geotechnical Engineer Illinois Department of Transportation Region 1/District 1
- From: Riyad Wahab, Ph.D. P.E. Senior Geotechnical Engineer

Date: July 28, 2022

Reference: I-55 - North and South Frontage Roads Sheet Pile Walls SN 022-0513 Section: 2021-068-CR Contract: 62P06 PTB: 196/017 (WO 7) CTL Project Number 22F761

As directed in your May 25, 2022, letter to Wang Engineering, Inc. (Wang), we have prepared this Technical Memorandum to address the geotechnical design aspects of the above referenced sheet pile walls. The two walls are part of the culvert ends' replacement project at Sawmill Creek under I-55 and the north and south frontage roads (see Attachment A – Project Location Map). As indicated in your letter and shown on the Preliminary Plans (Attachment D), the north retaining wall will extend from the culvert to approximately 150 feet east of the culvert. The south retaining wall will extend from the culvert to approximately 150 feet west of the culvert. Both walls will consist of driven sheet piles and will have a maximum exposed height of approximately 6 feet. Below is a summary of the subsurface explorations, geotechnical analyses, design recommendations and construction considerations related to the proposed sheet pile walls.

1.0 Subsurface Exploration

This section describes the subsurface exploration completed as part of this project. The subsurface investigation program was performed according to IDOT's Geotechnical Manual.

1.1 Subsurface Site Investigation

The subsurface investigation was conducted on June 21, June 22, and July 7, 2022. which included advancing a total of six (6) soil borings to depths of 30 feet bgs within the vicinity of the proposed improvements. Three borings (SB-1, SB-2 and SB-3) were performed along the proposed south sheet pile wall and three borings (SB-6, SB-7 and SB-8) were performed along the proposed north sheet pile wall (Attachment A – Boring Location Plan). The boring locations were selected by



CTL and were conducted in the field by Wang Engineering, Inc. (Wang) based on site conditions and accessibility, using 2.25-inch ID hallow stem augers, as stated on the boring logs. Ground surface elevations, stations and offsets of the borings were provided by Wang. Table 1 below presents a summary of the borings completed for the proposed sheet pile walls.

			Ground Surface Elevation (ft	Depth	
Boring	Station	Offset (ft)	MSL)	(ft)	Location
SB-1	562+04.28	121.31ft RT	633.13	30	EB S Frontage Road
SB-2	562+98.93	119.83ft RT	688.40	30	EB S Frontage Road
SB-3	563+99.57	120.02 RT	688.76	30	EB S Frontage Road
SB-6	566+45.78	118.26 LT	691.18	30	WB N Frontage Road
SB-7	567+21.58	119.12 LT	690.74	30	WB N Frontage Road
SB-8	567+79.62	119.65 LT	690.74	30	WB N Frontage Road

Table 1: Summary of Soil Borings

Based on the information in the boring logs provided by Wang, it appears that soil sampling was performed using the Standard Penetration Test (SPT, ASTM D 1556). In this procedure, a 2-inch O.D. split barrel or split spoon sampler is driven 18 inches into undisturbed soil using a 30-inch drop of a 140-pound hammer. The number of hammer drops (blow counts) is recorded in 6-inch intervals for each sample collected. The number of blow counts to advance the sampler the final 12 inches is called the SPT "N-value". The N-values are shown on the Soil Boring Logs in Attachment B. Soil samples were obtained with the split barrel sampler at 2.5-foot intervals to the boring termination depths.

Also, based on the information presented in the boring logs, it is our understanding that unconfined compressive strength values (Qu and Qp) were obtained in the field for the cohesive soils encountered during the subsurface investigation, using a calibrated Rimac compressive tester to determine the "Qu" according to IDOT procedure or a calibrated hand penetrometer to determine the "Qp". The hand penetrometer is typically used when a full-length sample could not be obtained to conduct the Rimac Qu test. Moisture content values for representative soil samples collected from each split spoon sampler are also shown on the boring logs. To verify soil classifications, Atterberg limits and particle size analysis tests were performed on select samples by Wang, Test results are included in Appendix C (Laboratory Test Results).

1.2 General Subsurface Conditions

General subsurface conditions are described below and are grouped based on similar soils encountered throughout the proposed improvements.

Generally, the surficial materials and the subsurface soils along the proposed south and north walls are quite similar in characteristics with varying thicknesses. Borings SB-1 through SB-3 (along



the south wall) encountered near surface material consisting of 6 to 7 inches of asphalt; however, its thickness in Borings SB-6 through SB-8 (along the north wall) is 14 inches. The asphalt layer is underlain by 6 to 24 inches of medium dense sandy gravel base course in all borings except in SB-3 where it is 6 feet thick. Below the surficial layers, the borings encountered layers of silty clay, silty clay loam and silty loam to the boring termination depths in the six borings. The strength of these cohesive soil layers varied from medium stiff to very stiff with Qu values ranging from 0.9 to 4.7 tsf, except one thin layer in SB-6 with 0.49 tsf and a near surface thin layer in SB-2 with 7.2 tsf. The particle size analysis tests results shown in Appendix C (Laboratory Test results) generally confirmed the original field soil descriptions, and thus did not affect the geotechnical analyses and recommendations in this report.

Detailed descriptions of the soil borings and the soil profiles along the proposed south and north walls are provided in Attachment B (Soil Borings and Soil Profiles) which provides specific conditions encountered at each soil boring location. The stratifications shown on the soil boring logs represent the conditions only at the actual soil boring locations and represent the approximate boundary between subsurface materials; however, the actual transition may be gradual.

1.3 Groundwater Conditions

Water level measurements were taken in the soil borings when water was encountered while drilling and after the completion of the soil borings. We assume that Wang did not leave any one of the borings open to collect delayed water readings after leaving the site due to safety concerns. Groundwater depths are shown in Table 2 below.

Tuble 2. Summery of Groundwater Depths (reet 5gs)				
		At Completion of		
Soil Boring	While Drilling	Drilling		
SB-1	Dry	Dry		
SB-2	10.00	25.00		
SB-3	Dry	Dry		
SB-4	11.30	Dry		
SB-6	10.00	13.50		
SB-7	10.00	Dry		
SB-8	23.00	20.00		

2.0 Geotechnical Analysis

This section provides the geotechnical analysis for the proposed sheet pile walls, based on the results of the field exploration and testing.



2.1 Seismic Parameters

The site located in Seismic Performance Zone (SPZ) 1. According to the 2012 IDOT Bridge Manual, Seismic design is not required for retaining walls located in SPZ 1 zone.

2.2 Slope Stability

Base on Figure 9 of the Ciorba Group "Tech Memo" dated 3/3/2016, slope failure was observed at the northeast wingwall; however, it is our opinion the figure rather indicates surficial sloughing or erosion than a typical slope failure. According to the Geotechnical Manual, embankment slopes less 15 feet high do not require slope stability analysis. The proposed cross sections at Stations 563+00, 563+50, 566+25 and 566+50 indicate slopes of 1V:1.5H (steeper than the standard 1:2). Based on the strength data in the soil borings, our preliminary stability analyses indicated adequate factors of safety (greater than the minimum required 1.5 for embankment fill).

2.3 Global Slope Stability

The sheet pile design is based on the lateral earth pressure parameters (Ka, Ko and Kp) which are typically derived by assuming certain failure surfaces, and thus the sheet pile walls are designed to consider these failure surfaces. As such, the sheet piles are design on a built-in safety factor and the slope stability analysis only adds a redundancy. Therefore, in this case where the sheet piles are driven into an embankment of limited height, no global stability analysis is required.

3.0 Geotechnical Recommendations

This section provides the geotechnical recommendations for the proposed improvements based on the results of the subsurface investigation and testing, and geotechnical analysis.

3.1 Lateral Earth Pressure Parameters

Based on the soil strength data in the six soil borings the south and north end wingwalls, respectively, CTL recommends the lateral earth pressure parameters shown in Table 3 below for the design of the south and north sheet pile walls, assuming the back slope is flat. Based on the cross sections at Stations 563+50 and 564+00 that show some backslopes as steep as 1V:1.5H, and the fact that these slopes might be subjected to possible future sloughing, CTL recommends that they should not be accounted for in any passive resistance.

Soil Description	Active Earth Pressure Coefficient (K _a)	Passive Earth Pressure Coefficient (K _p)	At-Rest Earth Pressure Coefficient (K ₀)
Stiff to Very Stiff, Silty Clay	0.36	2.77	0.53

Table 3 – Lateral Earth Pressure Parameters



4.0 Construction Recommendations

This section provides the construction recommendations for the proposed improvements based on the results of the subsurface investigation and testing, as well as the geotechnical analysis and recommendations. All work performed for the proposed project should conform to the requirements of IDOT Standard Specifications.

Based on the strength data in the soil borings, with Qu values marginally exceeding 4 tsf except in the two thin layers in SB-2 and SB-6, mentioned above, the sheet pile wall option appears to be feasible. However, care should be taken when driving the sheeting into these two thin hard layers mentioned in Section 1.2 above, to avoid possible crushing.

CTL recommends that the standard stepping and benching be followed when placing the new fill over the existing fill to avoid future slope failure. Also, standard, and timely erosion control measures should be constructed over the exposed slopes to avoid sloughing/erosion in the future.

5.0 Professional Disclaimer

This report was prepared based on the project information supplied by the client and is intended only for use on this project. This report was prepared by interpreting the data from the soil borings and field tests made during the field investigation, and from the results of any laboratory tests obtained from the samples taken. The report gives a representative, but not exhaustive, picture of the project subsurface conditions. The geotechnical engineer warrants that the findings, recommendations, specifications, and professional advice given within this report have been prepared using generally accepted professional engineering practices. The recommendations provided in the report are specific to the project described herein and are based on the information obtained from the soil boring locations within the proposed improvements. Changes involving the proposed improvements from those enumerated within this report should be submitted for our review to evaluate our recommendations.



Technical Memorandum I-55 Culvert Sheet Pile Walls CTL Project No. 22F761

Chicago Testing Laboratory, Inc. (CTL) appreciates the opportunity to work with you on this project and look forward to serving as your Geotechnical Engineering Consultant on future projects. We would be pleased to discuss any questions you have about the contents of this report.

Respectfully Submitted, CHICAGO TESTING LABORATORY, INC.

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Mike Kothawala -Wang Engineering, Inc.

 Attachments:
 Appendix A – Site Location and Boring Location Plan

 Appendix B – Soil Boring Logs and Soil Profiles
 Appendix C – Laboratory Test Results

 Appendix D – Preliminary Plans and Cross Sections (Provided by IDOT)

APPENDIX A

SITE LOCATION MAP AND BORING LOCATION PLAN



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APPENDIX B

SOIL BORING LOGS AND SOIL PROFILES



BORING LOG LEGEND

Relative Drilling Resistance				
RDR	Term 🔭	Criterion		
1	Very Easy	No chatter, very little resistance, very fast and steady drill advance		
2	Easy	No chatter, some resistance, fast and steady drill advance rate		
3	Moderate	Some chatter, firm drill resistance, moderate advance		
4	Hard	Frequent chatter, variable drill resistance, slow advance rate		
5	Very Hard	Constant chatter, variable and very slow drill advance, nearly refusal		

Soil Moisture Conditions			
Term	Appearance and Feel		
Dry	Soil sample looks and feels powdery or dusty; no		
Біў	indication of moisture. Free-running granular soils.		
Dama	Cohesive soils cannot be molded easily without adding		
Damp	water. Granular soil may not flow very easily.		
	Soil is near the optimum moisture content. Cohesive		
Moist	soils are near the plastic limit. Soil changes color slightly		
	when exposed to air for a short period.		
	One may feel a high degree of moisture, yet no free		
Wet	water is visible. Water may become visible if the sample		
Wet	is squeezed. Cohesive soil appears weak and sticks to		
	and/or stains hands. Granular soils tend to cohere.		
Coturated	Applied to granular soils that have free surface water;		
Saturated	water drains freely from the sample.		

Sample Type Symbols



Coarse (Coarse Gradation (mm) (ASTM D2488)			
Gravel	4.75 to 75			
Cobbles	75 to 300			
Boulders	> 300			

Propol (A	Proportional Terms (%) (ASTM D2488)		
Trace	< 5		
Few	5 to 10		
Little	15 to 25		
Some	30 to 45		
Mostly	50 to 100		

Relative Density of Non-Cohesive Soils (ASTM D1586)				
No. of Blows/ft	Relative Density			
0 - 4	Very Loose			
4 - 10	Loose			
10 - 30	Medium Dense			
30 - 50	Dense			
> 50	Very Dense			

Consistency of Cohesive Soils (ASTM D1586)			
Qu (tsf)	Consistency - 68		
< 0.25	Very Soft		
0.25 - 0.50	Soft		
0.50 - 1.00	Medium Stiff		
1.00 - 2.00	Stiff		
2.00 - 4.00	Very Stiff		
> 4.00	Hard		
Rock Quality Designation (ASTM D6032)			

, is the second			
x RQD (%).	Classification		
0 - 25	Very Poor		
25 - 50	Poor		
50 - 75	Fair		
75 - 90	Good		
90 - 100	Excellent		

SPT = Standard Penetration Test

- Q_u = Unconfined Compressive Strength Test P = Pocket Penetrometer
 - S = Shear failure (Rimac)
 - B = Bulge failure (Rimac)
- SSA = Solid Stem Auger
- HSA = Hollow Stem Auger

Geotechnical Construction Environmental Quality Engineering Services Since 1982













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APPENDIX C

LABORATORY TEST RESULTS





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AR GDT <u>v</u> KE225150.GPJ ΗQ SI7F GRAIN APPENDIX D

GENERAL PLAN AND LONGITUDINAL SECTION (PROVIDED BY IDOT)



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d	34	#4	4'-3''	
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h1	56	#6	49'-4"	
h2	12	#4	25'-8"	
h3	24	#5	8'-0"	
h4	10	#6	16'-1"	
h5	6	#9	16'-1"	
h6	30	#5	19'-1"	_
h7	24	#5	8'-0"	_
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h9	56	#6	65'-4"	-
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