Pavement Preservation

The American Concrete Pavement Association (ACPA) supports the use of sound concrete pavement preservation activities. Preservation has become an increasingly important strategy; however, ACPA also advocates addressing the definition of pavement preservation to provide better clarity for the agencies, legislators, and constituents.

Situation Analysis

- The term "pavement preservation" has emerged as an engineering term for minor rehabilitation and preventive maintenance. The current Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) definition of what constitutes pavement preservation is narrow in scope, including only techniques that do not add structural capacity (thickness) to a pavement (omitting overlays for example).
- Current draft transportation legislation includes language directing certain funding for the purpose of preserving the nation's transportation system. The legislator's view is to preserve the current system without adding additional traffic capacity (lanes). As such, the scope of pavement preservation in the views of legislators and other policymakers may not align with that of agencies and engineers.
- This incongruity runs the risk of impacting how the purpose of future funding may be interpreted and used, and more specifically, may disallow technically- and economically-feasible strategies.

Improved Definitions

- ACPA believes a much broader concept of roadway preservation needs to be promoted to, and adopted by, legislators and other policymakers to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding about the purpose of any funding dedicated to preserving our highway network. Roadway preservation means ensuring that the roadway continues to serve its intended purpose, which is to carry traffic. Under this definition, activities that ensure the roadway is in good working order are allowable, but adding traffic capacity or additional lanes to the roadway would not qualify.
- In order to keep the system functioning as intended (preserving what we have), a mix of fixes needs to be applied. In some cases, for severely damaged roadways, this involves reconstruction. In other cases, for less severely deteriorated roadways, it means major rehabilitation or concrete overlays. And, in still other instances, for pavements that are in need of minor rehabilitation or preventive maintenance, it involves pavement preservation activities.
- If a broadened definition is not adopted, agencies may be forced to use short-term fixes to address aging roadways, which could accelerate the degradation of infrastructure and may not provide the best option for using technology, or addressing economics, and/or sustainability.
- ACPA will continue to explore and communicate solutions—including regulatory and other policy changes—to ensure that concrete overlays, as well as other restoration, rehabilitation, and reconstruction strategies are presented fairly and objectively as roadway preservation strategies for agencies

Future Direction

The American Concrete Pavement Association views providing proactive resources and tools as an opportunity to educate, inform and strengthen the knowledge base of road agencies, government officials, as well the

community and constituents. The first step of this process includes looking at the overall Road Network Health of the area. How can we responsibility invest funding into road networks and have the best return on investment over the long-term?

The answer is in looking at how we balance Pavement Preservation along with New Road Construction and ongoing Pavement Maintenance. By developing a roadway system that has a plan to manage Road Network Health, multiple options present themselves which ensure fair competition, the best solutions for the network and the highest rate of return for the constituents.

The ACPA offers educational and technical education programs for a variety of audiences. For more information regarding how to properly develop and assess a pavement preservation segment of a Road Network Health program, please inquire via email (see below).

About the ACPA

Founded in 1963, The American Concrete Pavement Association (ACPA) is an advocate for concrete pavements, healthy competition, and an overall investment in infrastructure. The ACPA represents these interests at the national level to Congress, FHWA, FAA, national trade associations, and business organizations. ACPA supports research and promotion to improve the quality of concrete pavements and expand their use. ACPA provides engineering expertise, design tools, pavement specifications, construction best practices, and education to members and agencies. The ACPA is the world's largest trade association that exclusively represents the interests of those involved in the design, construction, and preservation of concrete pavements with nearly 400 member companies and 2,300 individuals across the US and abroad.

To inquire about technical/education programming, please email Mr. Leif Wathne at lwathne@acpa.org

For more information please visit acpa.org

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