



Preserving Your Shopping Center’s Asphalt: The Smart Approach with CAM Funds

As a shopping center manager, maintaining the appearance and functionality of your property is key to keeping tenants happy and attracting customers. One crucial, yet often overlooked, aspect of property management is pavement maintenance. The condition of your parking lot and drive lanes significantly impacts your center’s curb appeal, safety, and long-term operational costs. Investing in proactive pavement maintenance—such as crack sealing and asphalt seal coating—is not only an effective way to preserve your asphalt, but it can also be strategically charged to Common Area Maintenance (CAM) funds, delaying the need for costly capital expenditures like milling and paving.

Why Asphalt Maintenance Matters

Asphalt is durable, but it isn’t indestructible. Over time, exposure to traffic, water, UV rays, and temperature fluctuations causes it to deteriorate. Without proper maintenance, cracks and potholes form, allowing water to penetrate the subbase and accelerate damage. Eventually, this leads to expensive structural issues that require major rehabilitation or reconstruction.

Proactive maintenance, including crack sealing and seal coating, addresses these vulnerabilities before they become significant problems. This approach extends the life of your pavement, keeps repair costs down, and maintains a professional appearance for your shopping center.

Pavement Preservation Is The Solution!



Asphalt begins to age immediately following installation. Private paving projects (Commercial or DOT asphalt mixes) have a higher percentage of recycled asphalt introduced into the mix designs which cause them to oxidized and become brittle sooner. The days of being able to install a parking lot and then wait 20-30 years till

it requires milling and paving are over. New asphalt in the absence of a preventative maintenance plan can require milling and paving within 10 years of installation if the asphalt is built over a clay subgrade.

The Role of CAM Funds in Pavement Maintenance



CAM funds are shared expenses charged to tenants for maintaining and operating common areas, such as parking lots, landscaping, and lighting. Maintenance activities like crack sealing and seal coating are typically classified as operational expenses rather than capital expenditures, making them eligible for CAM charges. Here's how this benefits you:

- **Immediate Cost Allocation:** Maintenance costs can be distributed across tenants, reducing the financial burden on the property owner.
- **Tenant Satisfaction:** Well-maintained parking lots show tenants you're invested in the property's upkeep, enhancing retention.
- **Preservation of Asset Value:** By regularly maintaining asphalt, you prevent larger issues that would otherwise require significant capital outlays.

How Crack Sealing and Seal Coating Work:



Crack Sealing

Crack sealing involves filling cracks in the pavement with a hot rubberized material that prevents water infiltration. This process:

- Stops water from eroding the subbase.
- Prevents small cracks from expanding and forming potholes.
- Is a quick, cost-effective solution that significantly extends the pavement's lifespan.

Seal Coating

Seal coating is the application of a protective layer over asphalt surfaces. It offers:

- Protection from UV rays, water, oil, and other chemicals that can degrade asphalt.
- An improved aesthetic with a fresh, black finish that enhances curb appeal.
- Longevity by slowing the oxidation process and preventing surface wear.

When performed together, crack sealing and seal coating create a robust defense system for your asphalt.

In addition, if a pavement management plan is implemented for your shopping center crack sealing can be scheduled on a plan to take place automatically in the fall and spring to prevent small cracks from becoming larger and turning into potholes.

Start A Pavement Management Plan Today!



A **Pavement Management Plan (PMP)** for shopping centers is a strategic approach to maintaining and preserving the condition of parking lots, driveways, and other paved areas within the property. It combines regular inspections, proactive maintenance, and budgeting to maximize the lifespan of the pavement and minimize long-term costs. For shopping centers, where parking lots are a critical component of tenant and customer satisfaction, a PMP ensures safe, aesthetically pleasing, and functional paved surfaces.

Key Components of a Pavement Management Plan for Shopping Centers

1. Assessment and Documentation

- **Initial Inspection:** A thorough evaluation of the pavement's current condition, including cracks, potholes, drainage issues, and surface wear.
- **Condition Ratings:** Use industry-standard methods (e.g., Pavement Condition Index - PCI) to grade pavement quality.
- **Mapping:** Create a detailed site map with problem areas identified and prioritized.

2. Maintenance and Repair Strategies

- **Routine Maintenance:** Regular services to address minor issues and prevent major deterioration. Examples include:
 - **Sweeping and debris removal** to prevent clogging of drainage systems.
 - **Crack Sealing** to prevent water infiltration and freeze-thaw damage.
 - **Sealcoating** to protect against oxidation, UV damage, and surface wear.
- **Periodic Repairs:** More intensive actions to fix intermediate issues:
 - **Pothole Repairs (e.g., Infrared Asphalt Restoration):** Quick, durable fixes for small areas of distress.

- **Striping and Marking:** Ensures clear traffic flow and compliance with regulations, including ADA requirements.
 - **Rehabilitation or Reconstruction:** For severely deteriorated areas, planning for larger repairs like milling and paving or full reconstruction.
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3. Proactive Scheduling

- **Timeline Planning:** Schedule maintenance tasks at regular intervals (e.g., sealcoating every 3-5 years, crack sealing annually).
 - **Seasonal Adjustments:** Plan maintenance work for optimal weather conditions, avoiding extreme heat or cold.
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4. Budgeting and CAM Integration

- **Cost Allocation:** Identify maintenance costs that qualify as **Common Area Maintenance (CAM)** expenses to spread the financial responsibility among tenants.
 - Routine maintenance like crack sealing, sealcoating, and striping is often considered CAM.
 - **Capital Expenditures vs. Maintenance:** Delineate larger reconstruction projects as capital expenses to be budgeted separately.
 - **Lifecycle Cost Analysis:** Balance short-term maintenance costs against long-term savings from delayed major repairs.
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5. Monitoring and Updates

- **Ongoing Inspections:** Regular assessments (e.g., quarterly or biannually) to identify new issues and track the effectiveness of previous maintenance efforts.
 - **Data Management:** Maintain records of inspections, repairs, and costs for future reference.
 - **Adjustments:** Update the plan based on pavement performance and budget changes.
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Benefits of a Pavement Management Plan for Shopping Centers

1. **Cost Savings:** Proactive maintenance reduces the need for costly emergency repairs or full pavement reconstruction.
 2. **Increased Longevity:** Proper care extends the life of the pavement, delaying capital-intensive projects.
 3. **Improved Safety and Aesthetics:** Well-maintained lots create a safer environment for tenants and customers, enhancing the shopping center's appeal.
 4. **Regulatory Compliance:** Ensures adherence to ADA requirements and other local regulations.
 5. **Enhanced Tenant Satisfaction:** Reliable, attractive parking lots contribute to tenant retention and customer experience.
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A Pavement Management Plan provides shopping center managers with a roadmap for maintaining their most significant exterior asset—the parking lot. Would you like help developing a sample PMP tailored for your shopping center?

Delaying The Dreaded Capital Expenditures Of Asphalt & Concrete Replacement:



Major projects like milling and paving and large scale concrete replacement are expensive and disruptive, often requiring allocation from capital expenditure budgets. By incorporating regular maintenance into your CAM strategy, you can significantly delay the need for these costly projects. Here's how:

1. **Slowing Deterioration:** Crack sealing and seal coating address issues at the surface level, preventing damage from reaching deeper layers of the asphalt.
2. **Avoiding Structural Repairs:** Water infiltration is the primary cause of subbase failure. Maintenance ensures your asphalt's structural integrity remains intact.
3. **Planning Capital Budgets Strategically:** By extending the lifespan of your pavement, you'll have more flexibility to plan and allocate funds for eventual large-scale repairs or replacements.

Best Practices for Shopping Center Pavement Maintenance

1. **Develop a Maintenance Schedule:** Regularly inspect your parking lot for cracks, fading, and other signs of wear. Aim for crack sealing annually and seal coating every 2-3 years, depending on traffic levels.
2. **Communicate with Tenants:** Transparency with tenants about CAM fund usage for maintenance fosters trust and understanding.
3. **Partner with Experts:** Work with a professional pavement maintenance company that specializes in shopping center properties to ensure high-quality results and minimize disruptions.
4. **Monitor ROI:** Track the cost savings achieved by avoiding premature capital expenditures through effective maintenance.

Conclusion

Proactive pavement maintenance is a win-win for shopping center managers and property owners. Crack sealing and seal coating not only preserve the functionality and appearance of your parking lot but also represent a savvy use of CAM funds, reducing the financial strain of repairs on ownership and tenants alike. By investing in these preventative measures, you'll delay the need for costly milling and paving projects, ensuring your property remains safe, attractive, and cost-effective for years to come.

If you're ready to create a maintenance plan that preserves your asphalt and protects your bottom line, contact the experts at FixAsphalt.com today!

Call Toll Free: 1-877-349-2774