

Stretching Road Funds with up-to-date Specifications & Contract Requirements

A common reality in Colorado amongst municipalities is facing the challenge of an underfunded street/road improvement program and need exceeding available funding. Some agencies are in such dire straits that they consider turning under maintained paved streets back to gravel. One of the most effective strategies to maximize the investment of limited street/road improvement funds is to use specifications and contract requirements that reflect current industry best practices. CAPA has worked with several agencies in recent years to update their specifications, and these efforts are paying dividends, resulting in more competitive bids and improvements to quality and long-term pavement performance.

Two core goals of CAPA is to *“maintain and sustain effort on quality improvement while supporting safety, sound environmental practices, and efficiency measures.”* and to *“provide a high level of technical support, specification assistance, and new product guidance to agencies, consultants, and members.”* Agencies have been very receptive to suggestions that result in better value, improved quality and project cost savings.

CDOT has issued a new standard specifications revision (2017). We partnered with them on multiple technical work groups since the 2011 update and changes have been incorporated into the current version. One significant change is in Section 401.17 Compaction Provisions. The change allows contractors to continue compacting an asphalt mat at lower temperatures provided they can demonstrate that there is no damage to the finished material. This change recognizes advances in compaction technology, heavier rollers, and the use of compaction aids (i. e., WMA) that all allow compaction to specified density requirements at lower temperatures. This update further recognizes that achieving density is the most important parameter and allows more latitude to the contractor to achieve this end-result type requirement.

Earlier this year, we partnered with El Paso County and the City of Colorado Springs and updated the 2017 Pikes Peak Region Asphalt Paving Specification (PPRAPS). Version 4 was issued this spring and several important changes are expected to improve performance on area street and road projects. Two of the key changes were; 1. Reducing the design air voids from 4.0% to 3.5% to increase asphalt binder content by approximately 0.2%, and 2. Putting an emphasis on using a softer asphalt binder PG 58-28 in lieu of PG 64-22 on residential and collector streets. They also took a fresh look at the Construction Temperature Limitation requirements based on today's technology. The temperatures remained the same but a provision was added that allows a contractor to deviate as approved by the Engineer, provided all in place requirements (i.e., density) are met.

We are currently assisting the Metropolitan Government Pavement Engineers Council (MGPEC) and Douglas County in asphalt specification updates. The focus in both efforts is to ensure the Acceptance standards and the Sampling & Testing requirements are producible and lead to quality and long-term pavement performance. We have also found that specification update efforts allow for fruitful discussion on new technology (e.g., WMA) and how to address in the updates.

If it has been years since your last update and you are like everyone else trying to stretch the limited street funds, contact us and we would welcome the opportunity to assist your specification update efforts. We can be reached at (303) 741-6150 or office@co-asphalt.com



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