



nerej

Refresh and renew parking lots without the expense of repaving

May 29, 2014 - Front Section

Now that the snow has finally melted, one might think that retail and commercial parking lots will finally be clear. No liability hazards, no spaces occupied with piles of snow, nothing at all, really, to worry about.

Except when you pull into the lot you find it gray and grizzled, riddled with cracks, warped frost heaves and potholes. Sand and dirt cake the surface. The curb is in pieces and gravel has dumped out. In a few months, the winter has done to parking lots and property what a group of vandals couldn't do in a year. There's not much to be done, one might think, but repave the whole thing so that customers and/or tenants can enter without getting a flat tire or sprained ankle.

It might appear that maintenance crews will need to reach deep into the company coffers to roll back the lot to square one. But damage needs a closer look...it is not all as bad as it may seem.

Assessing the Damage

Depending on the type and size of the damage, property owners have plenty of cost-effective, time-saving options to repair existing pavement rather than completely replace it.

For most potholes and failure areas, infrared repair is the smartest solution. Heating up the asphalt to a workable temperature, the infrared process then allows a small crew to rake fresh asphalt into the problem area and compact it with a vibratory roller. The result is a fresh area of asphalt with the same or better life expectancy as the surrounding area - without the tenant impact of a large crew and potentially disruptive equipment operation.

Next, there is the issue of scuffed-up curbs, with gravel spilling onto the lot. Some patchwork could help for the small cracks, but there are typically also larger holes, with big concrete chunks sitting along it. In these cases, when a piece of curb has to be replaced, building owners should consider asphalt berm. Just as reliable as a typical concrete curb, berm provides a quick, simple barrier that blends with the surrounding pavement while still creating a firm perimeter around the property.

Sealcoat to Protect,

Sealcoat to Finish

What about the future? There are plenty of cost-saving options to fix pavement, but the same thing may happen again in a year, or even a few months. Sealcoating is the preventative solution, a quick protective layer applied to pavement to slow the harmful effects of oxidation, sun damage and water seepage. In fact, sealcoating is an absolute imperative to ensure a healthy, long-lasting parking lot.

Sealcoat is a great way to quickly beauty the landscape, immediately normalizing the total look of the lot - avoiding that asymmetrical, spotty mix of old and new concrete, dark black and faded gray and reducing the need for annual repair. Sealcoat provides a rich, black color over the entire surface, guaranteeing a uniform, fresh color, even over older, graying pavement. Sealcoating is the best way to refresh any property with a professional look, rejuvenated for the spring.

The warmer it is, the quicker sealcoat will adhere to the pavement. While warm weather is ideal, there's no reason not to start nowâ€”the longer pavement is protected from the sun, the better. This also helps to beat the late-summer rush, when every company looks to get their property protected before the winter.

Michael Musto is president and CEO, US Pavement Services, Woburn, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540