



Asphalt Industry Response to COVID-19 March 24, 2020

The asphalt industry in Colorado and across the country is poised to get to work and move forward with plans for critical transportation improvements. Our understanding is that projects are proceeding while encouraging precautions among workers. Additionally, Governor Polis and CDOT have deemed road construction an essential activity. Our Industry agrees that roadway maintenance and construction is an essential operation and our roadway infrastructure is critical, especially for our state's response to this crisis.

The asphalt industry is ready to support your local agency for the 2020 construction season. Asphalt plants are up and running (or planned to as weather permits) and asphalt supply is at normal levels. Industry has no disruptions in the material supply chain and is ready to work. Asphalt producers have responded....

- "Our plants are fired up! We don't close for the season. There may be maintenance, but we do it throughout the year and always keep at least one plant open."
- "Our plans are to begin operation by April 1st, if not sooner, and are on track with no planned delay."
- "We are taking Coronavirus seriously and implementing appropriate [health and safety practices](#). Our industry has the opportunity to continue working so it's important we remain safe and diligent."

In a conference call on March 20, CDOT Chief Engineer Steve Harelsen stated that "we have an opportunity to make lemonade out of lemons." In other words, make something positive out of the negative situation caused by Covid-19. CDOT is considering changing some projects planned to be done at night into day jobs because of reduced traffic volumes. The Staff Materials group is considered essential, working full staff, with others available if needed and there should not be any delays in the approval of submittals. Where appropriate, they will consider implementing the floating start date specification on projects via a special provision for future projects. Construction is exempt from the [executive order](#) signed by Gov. Polis directing all of Colorado's non-critical employers to reduce their in-person workforce by 50%. CDHPE has issued [a public health order](#) (FAQ [click here](#)). A number of states are accelerating construction and contractors are ready for work. [NAPA's Coronavirus Response Page](#).

CDOT Executive Director Shoshana Lew and Chief Engineer Steve Harelsen are guiding CDOT's response to their 2020 construction season. A work shut down is NOT being considered and normal bidding resumed this week (March 26) and will continue through the spring. They are moving forward with protocols to keep things as normal as possible and developing guidance on traffic control on projects impacted by any slow down due to the virus. There is a potential for a federal stimulus and CDOT does have a list of shovel ready projects. Additionally, the Chief has issued a [CDOT Memo on Health Safety on Construction Projects](#) and is looking to even accelerate the construction season where possible and has reached out to industry for support.

CAPA has reached out to our Local Agency partners across the state to provide a snapshot of information on how their Public Works Departments are planning to address their 2020 Paving Programs. Local Agencies are moving forward as planned, echoing CDOT's plan to take advantage of lowered traffic volumes, shifting work hours and industry readiness to keep your local agency, industry and the economy working in a safe and productive manner.

- “We are just starting to develop our response plan for our 2020 Streets Paving Program. Currently, our full program is scheduled to proceed as soon as the City resumes operations. In fact, we may be adding an additional \$1.3M to the paving program.”
- “Everything is going good so far. We have all our 2020 programs in place and ready to go with the exception of the Mill and Overlay contract which is currently being reviewed for award. The scope and budget for our 2020 paving program has not changed.”
- “Our 2020 paving program contract is currently in the Purchasing Dept. and we plan to advertise it this week. We recognize the negative trickledown economic impacts if we don't continue with the full scope and budget for the 2020 program, so there are no changes. We are ready to begin our springtime Public Works operations (e.g., crack fill and patching). Our annual paving program is not impacted.”
- “In looking at Rocky Mountain Bidnet, we see that cities are still putting out RFPs. We have already talked internally that we would focus dollars first on preservation then construction if we have to prioritize.”

CAPA is well positioned to support a successful 2020 construction season and help contractors and their agency partners to navigate through the health concerns and constraints imposed by Covid-19. Let us know how we can help.



Executive Director, PE
Colorado Asphalt Pavement Association
(303) 229-6710 tompeterson@co-asphalt.com



Mike Skinner, PE
Director of Pavement Engineering
(720) 588-7351 mikeskinner@co-asphalt.com