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Diocese of Cleveland Facilities Services Corporation

How We Assess Our Parking Lots

It is always our goal to make sure, when visiting one of the Diocese facilities that the parking lot adjacent to the building is in good condition void of hazards. Routinely we encourage the building manager and/or the maintenance person to complete a survey of the parking lot.

Quality control (QC) is a time-tested method for performing this survey by first collecting the data necessary to accomplish this task. This data collection is a 3-part process starting first with researching what it takes to create a survey checklist, and second developing the checklist for the application. For example, is the parking lot application simply an area adjacent to the facility or is the parking lot an open or enclosed, multi-level parking structure? The third part of the survey is to then go out and walk the site documenting the existing conditions and scoring each line item 1 through 5 (excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor) with 5 being "excellent."

In sync with researching what should go onto a survey sheet, a standardized checklist should be drafted in advance of completing a walk-through. It is recommended whenever implementing a survey that the surveyor make sure photographs are taken of deficiencies noted and score on this checklist. A suggested sorting of categories to make up this checklist are as follows:

- **First Impressions** e.g., the appearance of the parking lot, exterior of the parking facility, overgrown bushes that could be considered a security concern concealing a person, etc.
- **Safety Hazards** e.g., missing pieces of the parking surface resulting in a tripping hazard, inadequate exit signage and/or inadequate lighting of these signs, etc.
- **Security** e.g., adequate lighting, light fixtures that do not work, emergency call box/button, etc.

- **Accessibility** e.g., accessible parking, accessibility in and out of parking structures, elevators, etc.
- **Structural Conditions** e.g., of the parking surface, building exterior, roof, interior floor and ramps, etc.

This survey should occur during the daylight hours and then again at night to see first-hand the conditions of the parking lot or parking structure. In addition, the survey checklist should also be used to complete the survey under inclement conditions such as immediately after a snowstorm or rainstorm. Issues to take note of are:

- **After a snowstorm** e.g., do snow piles obstruct a driver's view upon entering or leaving the parking area, is there a program in place to implement snow -melt procedures with necessary supplies conveniently located, are there specific locations where melting snow will be able to "pool" and

freeze, etc.

- **After a rainstorm** e.g., specific areas where puddles of water can obstruct accessibility, slipping hazard, etc.

This survey should be a bi-annual event because of the existing conditions in the winter e.g., frost heaves won't show up if the survey was competed during the summer. During the summer the observation of cracks in the hot-top surface may have been created by last winter's frost heave and simply sealing each crack may not resolve the problem.

Data analysis of the items scored will follow the completion of the QC checklist so that a solution plan can be developed. This solution plan will have the following recommendations:

Urgent – those deficiencies scored at #1-Poor condition:

- Based on safety concern e.g., tripping hazard
- Based on possible structural concern(s) that may need further review by a qualified consultant
- Pursue contractor costs to replace or repair

Budget for Next Year – those deficiencies scored at #2-Fair condition:

- Based on existing conditions that could pose a problem to foot traffic and vehicle traffic in the parking lot or parking structure
- Conditions that can be expected to go from "fair" to "poor" in a relatively short period of time e.g., signs of cracks in the parking surface resulting from past winter conditions
- Pursue contractor costs to budget replacement or repairs

Long Term Master Plan – those observations not yet considered a potential deficiency scored at #3-Good and #4-Very Good conditions:

- Based on parking lot and/or park structure improvements e.g., replace light fixtures with anticipated energy efficient fixture technology. (Note: this should be an annual review consideration to determine the economic return-on-investment or potential changes in codes.)
- Pursue contractor budget costs to replace or repair e.g., 5-year master plan

Do Nothing – those observations that are not considered a deficiency and scored at #5-Excellent

Depending on where the building is, parking lots can be considered a luxury for building owners and it is important that these locations are maintained and preserved for those who will visit and/or are residents of the facility.

Performing a QC survey using a standardized checklist specifically created for the site can continuously be improved when used. Hindsight is 20-20 when the survey is implemented and so there will often be additional tasks to review based on this semi-annual facility management task. That said, using a simplistic checklist and scoring the observations shouldn't take but an hour to complete followed by another hour to summarize the findings into a brief parking lot report, and even this report can be standardized once the first report is completed. In years to come, the surveyor will have the benefits of a time-tested checklist and a template to document the findings.

For additional assistance evaluating your parking lot or identifying pre-qualified contractors and civil engineers, contact the Diocese of Cleveland Facility Services Corporation.

For more information:
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