

Final Report

Sustainable Design of Concrete Bus Pads to Improve Mobility in Baltimore City

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16. Abstract

Public transit, particularly buses in Baltimore City, plays a vital role in sustainable transportation in the United States as well as providing mobility to those without cars. Bus pads are usually constructed in the street, adjacent to a bus zone, to accommodate the weight of a bus. Bus pads are highly durable areas of the roadway surface at bus stops, usually made of concrete, addressing the common issue of asphalt distortion at bus stops. These concrete slabs bear the burden of the daily stream of buses better than asphalt. The major problem with the asphalt bus pads is shifting asphalt creating waves or ripples under buses' weight, and when asphalt shifts, it cracks and can create potholes. Roadway pavements need to be strong enough to accommodate repetitive bus axle loads. Exact pavement designs will depend on site specific soil conditions. Areas where buses start, stop, and turn will be of particular concern for pavement design. Concrete pavement is desirable in these areas to avoid the failure problems that are experienced with asphalt. Concrete bus pads should be constructed based on the bus service frequency and type of transit vehicle used. However, if the concrete bus pad is not properly designed, it will encounter different problems with serviceability and strength of the slab.

During a case study in Baltimore City that was used to collect preliminary data for the proposed research, it was observed that most of the concrete bus pads require more than regular routine maintenance due to surface cracks and local failure, resulting in major replacement costs for Baltimore City. Lack of appropriate load identification and definition of critical load scenarios for the appropriate design of the concrete bus pad were noted as shortcomings in addition to the design assumption of uniform distribution of soil pressure under the concrete slab, which was not the case noted in the field.

This research carried out a field study and extracted two concrete strips in longitudinal and transvers axis from a bus pad in Baltimore. The concrete strips were tested at the Structures Laboratory of Morgan State University, under a four-point bending produced by two concentrated monotonic loads. The load and deflection were measured using precise instruments including LVDTs and load cells to investigate the concrete strips' performances under the applied load until failure. All load cases and combinations were identified and determined based on possible loading scenarios. A numerical model was developed and soilstructure interaction was studied using the Winkler method. The maximum design forces and moments were extracted from the FE model, which considers the effect of moving loads on a two-way slab as well as the temperature. This research evaluated the load-bearing capacity of the current design of Baltimore bus pads and compared it to the tested strips as well as the required bending capacity of FE models. Results show that both design and construction of bus pads in Baltimore need to be modified. In conclusion, design and construction recommendations were proposed to enhance bus pads' life span in Baltimore City to address the current issues and reduce maintenance costs.

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Executive Summary

Public transit, particularly buses in Baltimore City, plays a vital role in sustainable transportation in the United States as well as providing mobility to those without cars. Bus pads are usually constructed in the street, adjacent to a bus zone, to accommodate the weight of a bus. Bus pads are highly durable areas of the roadway surface at bus stops, usually made of concrete, addressing the common issue of asphalt distortion at bus stops. These concrete slabs bear the burden of the daily stream of buses better than asphalt. The major problem with the asphalt bus pads is shifting asphalt creating waves or ripples under the bus' weight, and when asphalt shifts, it cracks and can create potholes. Roadway pavements need to be strong enough to accommodate repetitive bus axle loads. Exact pavement designs will depend on site specific soil conditions. Areas where buses start, stop, and turn will be of particular concern for pavement design. Concrete pavement is desirable in these areas to avoid the failure problems that are experienced with asphalt. Concrete bus pads should be constructed based on the bus service frequency and type of transit vehicle used. However, if the concrete bus pad is not properly designed, it will encounter different problems with serviceability and strength of the slab, resulting in cracking and the need for either repair or replacement, which has been the current outcome for Baltimore City.

It was observed that **most of the concrete bus pads require more than regular routine maintenance due to surface cracks and local failure**, resulting in major replacement costs for Baltimore City. A lack of appropriate load identification and definition of critical load scenarios for the appropriate design of the concrete bus pad were noted as shortcomings, in addition to the design assumption of uniform distribution of soil pressure under the concrete slab, which was not the case noted in the field. Therefore, the *main objectives* of the proposed research are to: 1) experimentally test the current designed bus pad (strip) and identify the causes of concrete surface cracks by comparing the results with finite element models, 2) recommend appropriate design criteria for immediate deployment of newly designed bus pads based on experimental test data from in-situ bus pads (strips) retrieved from the field prior to a replacement job, which can also be expanded for implementation in other urban areas to support sustainable transportation infrastructure design. Implications from this study have the potential to not only improve urban mobility but also serve as a baseline approach toward sustainable infrastructure design to support the development of smart cities that may rely on wireless sensor networks embedded within transportation infrastructure elements like concrete bus pads.

1. Motivation and Background

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) operates a comprehensive transit system throughout the Baltimore-Washington Metropolitan Area with a daily ridership of 380,100 people and an annual ridership of 112,528,100 people. There are 80 bus lines with 842 buses serving Baltimore's public transportation needs, along with other services that include the Light Rail, Metro subway, and MARC train. With nearly half the population of Baltimore residents lacking access to a car, the MTA is an important part of the regional transit picture [1]. Therefore, having durable infrastructure to support the bus transit system and mobility of its users is critical, especially for Baltimore City. Crumbling bus pads where the buses stop to pick up riders are problematic; there is a need to investigate the cause of the cracking and develop a more sustainable design approach so that bus pads are not replaced as often, which would in turn reduce costs and disruptions to service.

Bus pads are highly durable areas of the roadway surface at bus stops, usually made of concrete, addressing the common issue of asphalt distortion at bus stops. Conventional asphalt pavement is flexible, and can be moved by the force and heat generated by braking buses and trucks, leading to wave-shaped hills or hummocks along the length of a bus stop. This issue is pronounced at high-volume stops where idling buses further heat the roadway surface, as well as near-side stops in mixed-traffic lanes where trucks may be adding to wear and tear.

Bus stops' concrete slabs bear the burden of the daily stream of buses better than asphalt. If asphalt is used rather than concrete for the 10-foot by 60-foot rectangles, then the asphalt shifts and creates waves or ripples under the buses' weight, and when asphalt shifts, it cracks and can create potholes. Moreover, compared to asphalt, concrete is stronger, longer-lasting, and reflective at night, which helps distinguish the bus stops. But if concrete is so much better at handling use and weight, why not pave all roads with concrete? The main reasons are: 1) concrete is far more difficult to repair, and 2) concrete costs more than asphalt; however, the latter cannot be applicable in countries whose oil products prices are higher. In pavement design, asphalt is called flexible pavement, which generally consists of a thin layer spread over a gravel or stone base and sub-base, and all these layers rest over compacted soil. When a large weight such as a bus or heavy vehicle rests on the asphalt pavement, or when the pavement is subjected to break forces, the bottom layers including base, sub-base and compacted soil can shift. In contrast, concrete that is used as rigid pavement may or may not have a base course between the pavement and subgrade. When a large weight rests on concrete, the weight is distributed over a relatively wide area of the subgrade. However, since concrete's surface is thicker than asphalt, repairing concrete requires replacing the entire road, whereas repairing asphalt requires only scraping off the top surface and relaying a new surface.

Cracks and damage in concrete pavement occur as a result of shrinkage, settlement, uplift, excessive weight atop the slab, etc. When the existing concrete pavement develops gaps, cracks, chips, displacement, holes, or other defects, permanent repair or replacement of the concrete pavement is required in order to maintain defect-free pavement and provide a safe public environment. Reinforcement should be used in concrete bus pads to control cracks, damage, and produce aggregate interlock, which helps to keep the cracked sections close together so that the slab will act as a unit and transfer loads across a crack.

2. Literature Review

This research identifies surface cracks and damage of concrete bus pads occurring under the existing design in Baltimore through numerical and experimental investigations in order to address the current design and construction issues and provide recommendations for repairing existing and designing new bus pads. The surface cracks and damage in concrete pavements are among the major problems of concrete pavements and have been studied from different aspects. A list of previous research is provided in this section:

Concrete Pavement Crack Control and Prevention:

Oh et al. [2] investigated movements of transverse crack width of the continuously reinforced concrete pavement (CRCP) subjected to environmental loads such as changes in temperature. To this end, in-situ experiments were carried out at several highway CRCP sections. The crack width movements were analyzed along the vertical, transverse and longitudinal directions to comprehensively understand the crack width behaviors of CRCP. The effects of design-related variables, such as steel ratio and base layer type, and performance-related variables, such as crack spacing and crack occurrence time, on crack width movements were evaluated. Based on the findings from this comprehensive experimental study concerning crack widths, suggestions were proposed to improve the performance of CRCP as below:

- The crack width movements are the largest at the top of concrete slab and inversely proportional to the slab temperature variations. The crack width movements at different slab depths are mainly dependent on the temperatures at the top of slab, and the time lags in the crack width movements along the slab depth cannot be observed as can be seen in the slab temperatures.
- The crack width movements are affected by the longitudinal location. Those are larger near the free end terminals than at the central section of the CRCP. Very little differences in the crack width movements are observed along the transverse direction (along the crack).
- The crack width movements tend to become larger as the crack spacing increases and are mostly affected by the crack spacing when the crack occurred, instead of the current crack spacing.
- The crack width movements are affected by the crack occurrence time as well. Even though the crack spacings are currently similar, the crack width movements would be larger at the cracks that occurred in the early age of the pavement.
- Both the crack openings and temperature drops are generally larger in the summer. However, the crack openings per unit temperature drop in the summer and winter are very similar. Therefore, the crack width movements are dependent mainly on the amount of temperature change regardless of seasons.
- The type of base layer beneath the concrete slab affects the crack width movements and the CRCP with an asphalt bond breaker layer reveals larger crack width movements compared to the CRCP with a lean concrete base.
- The crack width movements tend to increase as the longitudinal steel ratio becomes smaller.

Xiao and Wu [3] studied the longitudinal cracking of jointed plain concrete pavements in Louisiana through a field investigation and numerical simulation. They believe that the current pavement design guide does not directly consider longitudinal cracking in concrete pavement. However, longitudinal cracking has been widely observed on joint plain concrete pavements, and sometimes is deemed even more significant than transverse cracking, which adversely affects the performance and service life of concrete pavements. They investigated the possible causes for the longitudinal cracking problem in joint plain concrete pavements, and their results confirmed that construction problems such as inadequate longitudinal joint formation and inadequate base support are among the contributing factors, in particular for premature and localized longitudinal cracks. The field survey indicated that the amounts of longitudinal cracking increased with widened slabs and tied concrete shoulders. Results from numerical simulation further demonstrated that the geometry of a slab could greatly influence the potential of longitudinal cracking, especially when the traffic is composed of more tandem and tridem axles. They developed an empirical model based on the field data to predict the longitudinal cracking in concrete pavements.

Liu et al. [4] performed a comparative study on cracking and its associated factors of continuously reinforced concrete pavement. They focused on the punchout, one of the main failure modes of continuously reinforced concrete pavement, which is closely related to concrete cracking, the form and distribution pattern of pavement crack. The paper studies the influence of temperature and humidity on the continuously reinforced concrete pavement cracking conditions of the test-road, and the application of continuously reinforced concrete pavement in the tunnel and outside, by investigating the crack development. It is found that the daily temperature difference is 2 degree centigrade in the tunnel, and the annual temperature difference and humidity are 8.9% and 75% \sim 85%, respectively. Temperature during the construction, and curing temperature and humidity of continuously reinforced concrete pavement greatly influences the crack occurrence. Cracks outside the tunnel occur more and with more concentrated distribution in the early stage. Crack distribution in the tunnel is more reasonable. After eight months that include a winter, the crack number increased significantly outside, while the spacing was wider and the width was smaller in the tunnel. Results show that appropriate temperature and humidity can guarantee a more successful cement road application, continuously reinforced concrete pavement crack form is more reasonable, performance in the crack width is small, and the spacing is big, which reduces the possibility of punchout and spalling.

Choi et al. [5] conducted research identifying horizontal cracks or delamination in concrete pavement and bridges. Since more concrete structures and pavements in the U.S. are approaching or have already exceeded their design lives, the number of distresses and needed repairs have increased, along with the amount of funding needed. In this study, various concrete distresses in

structures and pavements were evaluated with MIRA testing, which is based on the ultrasonic pulse-echo method. The distresses evaluated included horizontal cracking or delamination at the mid-depth of concrete pavement slabs, spalling and map cracking in concrete pavement slabs, mudballs in concrete runways, concrete cracks and delamination in bridge columns, and shallow concrete cover in bridge piers. MIRA was able to detect discontinuities in concrete, whether they are cracks, delamination at an interface of two concrete slabs, mudballs, or reinforcing steel.

Rigid Pavement Settlement:

Combrinck et al. [6] investigated the influence of concrete depth and surface finishing on the crack of plastic concrete. Settlement and shrinkage cracking occur in plastic concrete once cast up to and around the final setting time. Combrinck et al. reported on the influence of element depth and surface finishing operations on the cracking of plastic concrete. Deeper concrete elements are shown to have less severe shrinkage cracking when no settlement cracking is present, while when combined with settlement cracking at similar cover depths, the cracking is more severe in deeper concrete. Surface finishing operations are shown to only close the surface of plastic cracks and not the crack below the surface, therefore temporarily hiding the true severity of the cracking.

Combrinck et al. [7] also performed research on the interaction between settlement and shrinkage cracking in plastic concrete. The plastic period in conventional concrete is dominated by two volume changes, namely, plastic settlement and plastic shrinkage, which if restrained can result in cracking. Although both volume changes and the resulting cracking have been well documented, cracking during the plastic period remains a problem. One reason is the complex interaction between these cracks. This research showed the necessity of considering the combined effect of plastic settlement and plastic shrinkage cracking when investigating the cracking of plastic concrete. This is achieved by isolating both cracking types individually, followed by the interaction between these cracks. Plastic settlement cracking shows multiple tensile surface cracks and shear-induced cracks below the surface. Plastic shrinkage cracking shows a single well-defined crack pattern which forms suddenly throughout the entire depth of the concrete. When combined, significant crack widening can occur long before normally expected due to the negative synergy between these two crack types.

Effect of Additives and Fibers on Enhancing Crack Resistance:

Boikova et al. [8] conducted a series of tests and used two additives simultaneously to increase crack resistance and tensile strength in bending and decrease abrasion. A complex admixture, based on a mix of polycarboxylate polymers modified by inorganic substances including nanostructure elements SiO2×nH2O which are parts of silicic acid, was developed as an admixture of polyfunctional action (activating and plasticizing actions). Concrete with these two additives used in rational quantities is characterized by a 58%-59% increase of compressive strength and an 83%-91% increase of tensile strength in bending, with the coefficient of crack resistance rising by 17%-20% [8].

Yang et al. [9] studied the benefits of using amorphous metallic fibers in concrete pavement for long-term performance. This study aims to examine the implications of amorphous metallic fibers on the mechanical and long-term properties of concrete pavement. Two different amounts of amorphous metallic fibers were incorporated into concrete, and plain concrete without fibers was also adopted for comparison. Test results indicated that including the fibers improved the overall mechanical properties of concrete, and the improvement increased when a higher amount of fibers was used. In particular, the equivalent flexural strength and flexural strength ratio were substantially improved by incorporating the amorphous metallic fibers. This may enable the thickness of airfield concrete pavement to decrease. Adding amorphous metallic fibers also improved the resistance to surface cracking of concrete pavement by repeated wheel loading. In addition, by adding 5 kg/m³ and 10 kg/m³ amorphous metallic fibers in concrete pavement, roughly 1.2 times and 3.2 times longer service life was expected, respectively, as compared to their counterpart, plain concrete. Based on a life cycle cost analysis, the use of amorphous metallic fibers in concrete pavement was effective at decreasing the life cycle cost compared to plain concrete pavement, especially for severe traffic conditions.

Smirnova et al. [10] researched the influence of polyolefin fibers on the strength and deformability properties of road pavement concrete. In this study the influence of the type and quantity of polyolefin fibers on the strength properties (compression strength, tensile strength in bending, strength in uniaxial tension), the deformation properties (elastic modulus, Poisson's coefficient) and the abrasion resistance of cement concrete with water-to-cement ratios within 0.31-0.55 were stated in the paper. The ways of introducing fibers into fresh concrete were investigated. The method of introduction and mixing procedure were shown to improve the uniform distribution of fibers in fresh concrete. The increase of the bending tensile strength and the uniaxial tensile strength of concrete with fibers in comparison with the reference concrete was observed with the water-to-cement ratio decrease. The increase of uniaxial tensile strength at age 28 days for concrete with macrofibers in the amount of 4.5 kg/m^3 was 23% and 29%; for macrofibers in the quantity of 3 kg/m³ it was 19% and 26% with a water-cement ratio equal to 0.49 and 0.31, respectively. The maximum reduction of abrasion in the range of 7.5%-10% was observed in concrete with water-to-cement ratios within 0.44-0.55 for all investigated types of fibers. The influence of fibers on the concrete abrasion with lower w/c ratio was negligible. The results can contribute to the rational use of modified polyolefin fibers in road pavement concrete. Alsaif et al. [11] investigated the mechanical performance of steel fiber reinforced rubberized concrete for flexible concrete pavements. This work aims to develop materials for flexible concrete pavements as an alternative to asphalt concrete or polymer-bound rubber surfaces and presents a study on steel fiber reinforced rubberized concrete (SFRRuC). The main objective of this study is to investigate the effect of steel fibers (manufactured and/or recycled fibers) on the fresh and mechanical properties of rubberized concrete (RuC) comprising waste tire rubber (WTR). Free shrinkage is also examined. The main parameters investigated through 10 different mixes are WTR and fiber contents. The results show that the addition of fibers in RuC mixes with WTR replacement substantially mitigates the loss in flexural strength due to the rubber content (from 50% to 9.6% loss, compared to conventional concrete). The use of fibers in RuC can also enable the development of sufficient flexural strength and enhance strain capacity and post-peak energy absorption behavior, thus making SFRRuC an ideal alternative construction material for flexible pavements.

Mehta et al. [12] conducted research on filled cracking performance of rigid pavements. They tested pavements of three different flexural strengths as well as two different subgrades, a soft bituminous layer and a more rigid layer known as econocrete. In addition, cracking near two types of isolated transition joints, a reinforced edge joint and a thickened edge joint, was considered. A moving load was used to test the pavement sections and the researchers determined that the degree of cracking was reduced as the flexural strength of the pavement was increased and fewer cracks formed over the econocrete base than over the bituminous base. In addition, the thickened edge transition joint was more effective in preventing cracking at the edges compared to the reinforced edge joint.

A number of studies have been carried out to provide a guideline for bus stops in the United States by state DOTs and local agencies [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19]; however, only a few of them include the concrete bus pad design in the design guidelines.

3. Problem Statement and Research Objectives

Although replacing asphalt pavement with concrete pads for bus stops has improved the pavement performance under cyclic loads and break forces of buses, the concrete pads' deterioration and surface cracks have been increasingly reported in Maryland and Baltimore. This issue has become more serious due to significant increases in maintenance costs year over year. In order to address this issue and enhance the current concrete bus pad design, this research employs experimental and numerical methods to analyze and design the concrete bus pads in Baltimore under critical loads. The main objectives are to 1) identify critical loading scenarios, 2) evaluate the structural response, assessing deficiencies, and 3) present recommendations to enhance the current design and propose a new design for concrete bus pads in Baltimore.

Figure 1. Field location and problem observation, (a) location of taking the field samples, (b) surface cracks were observed on concrete bus pad designed for Baltimore City

4. Rigid Pavement Performance and Typology of Cracks

4.1. Performance Evaluation

Bus pads as a part of urban pavement play a vital role in infrastructure's sustainable development; however, in many cities they are in bad condition and perform poorly. The bus pads' defects can decrease the road safety and increase maintenance and transportation costs. Five (5) main factors were identified as reasons for bus pad deficiencies including:

- 1) Environment
- 2) Structure
- 3) Construction
- 4) Maintenance
- 5) Traffic

Bus pads deteriorate over time due to the effect of stresses caused by traffic and the environment. How a bus pad responds to these stresses will depend on the bus pad structure – such as material type, layers thickness and subgrade properties – and construction characteristics, including construction technologies, quality, and maintenance, such as treatments applied, timing, and methods.

Bus pad performance at a certain time of the service life can be characterized and assessed in terms of particular distresses or a combined index that represents the bus pad's overall condition. The factors involved in the determination of the bus pad condition are the material type and the distresses observed. In both cases, the performance indicator reflects the bus pad condition at a specific age of the pavement service life. It is important not only to understand the current condition of bus pads, but also how their condition will change over time.

For this reason, the effectiveness of maintenance treatments over time relies on making the decision based on the current bus pad condition and its performance model. In other words, a life cycle analysis of the bus pad should be performed. The typical cycle of deterioration of a bus pad, as a part of a pavement, comprises three stages [20], as shown in [Figure 2.](#page-17-0) These stages are related to different types of maintenance:

- Slow Phase (Phase A on [Figure 2](#page-17-0)): For several years the pavement experiences a slow deterioration process, particularly in the surface, and also, though to a lesser degree, the rest of its structure. The deterioration rate depends on the quality of the initial construction. To stop this process of deterioration it is necessary to apply, with some frequency, various maintenance treatments, mostly on pavement surface and drainage works. The group of these maintenance activities is defined as Preservation and should be performed as part of routine maintenance.
- Accelerated Phase (Phase B on [Figure](#page-17-0) 2): After several years of use, the pavement enters a stage of accelerated deterioration. At the beginning of this phase, the basic structure of the pavement is still intact, the surface distresses are minor, and the common user has the impression that it still remains in good condition; however, it is not. Going further in phase B, more damage to the surface is observed and the basic structure begins to

deteriorate, which is not visible. These distresses begin as punctual, and slowly spread until eventually they affect most of the pavement surface. This phase is relatively short. Once the surface damage is widespread, destruction is accelerated. At the start of this phase reinforcing the pavement surface usually is sufficient, so maintenance is relatively low cost. Once a suitable reinforcement is applied, the pavement again is suitable for function and can withstand the traffic for many more years. This type of activity is defined as Functional Maintenance or simply Maintenance.

- Break Phase (Phase C on [Figure](#page-17-0) 2): After the accelerated phase, the optimal intervention time passes, and the more the intervention is delayed, the greater the damage and the higher the repair cost. The damage that occurred in the basic structure of the road must be repaired, which means demolishing and lifting the damaged parts, replacing components with new ones and then reinforcing the road surface. This group of activities is frequently named Structural Maintenance or Rehabilitation, when it refers to the combination of partial repairs on the basic structure of the road and strengthening its surface.
- Decomposition Phase (Phase D on [Figure](#page-17-0) 2): When no interventions are applied at any time in previous phases, the pavement reaches the point of breakdown, and failure is widespread for both the pavement surface and basic structure. Decomposition of the road is the last stage of its existence and can last several years. At this phase the only solution is the reconstruction of the pavement.

Figure 2. Pavement life cycle *[20]*

Based on the deterioration stages, it is essential to consider maintenance activities for each stage to optimize resources and extend the service life of pavement with a good condition. Thus, activities for preservation, maintenance and rehabilitation (P&M&R) need to be defined for application throughout bus pad service life.

4.2. Defects and Causes

Concrete bus pads are mainly considered as rigid pavement in design and repair methods, thus there are similar concerns in terms of defects and causes of defects. When it comes to the repair of distressed concrete pavements, few options are available. It is very difficult and time consuming to repair hardened concrete. Full-depth and partial-depth repair, slab replacement, crack sealing, crack stitching, and staple pinning are some of the techniques that can be used to repair distressed concrete pavements. The causes and repair techniques for these distresses are discussed as follows:

4.2.1. Settlement Cracks

Settlement of the subgrade and subbase can cause cracking of the concrete pavement. Cracks resulting from settlement of the subgrade are normally variable in direction but most commonly appear diagonally and extend continuously to many slabs. Repeated heavy truck loads may cause further breaking of the slabs into several pieces due to the loss of support beneath the slab. Locations with underlying pipe culvert and slab culvert are more prone to settlement cracking. Also, settlement of the subgrade and other pavement layers over pipe culverts and in the vicinity of slab culverts mainly during and after rainy seasons can cause full-depth cracking of overlying concrete slabs.

4.2.2. Shrinkage Cracking

Like all materials, concrete also expands and contracts with variations in temperature. Concrete shrinkage starts as it cures. The temperature and moisture gradient that exists between the top and bottom of the concrete pavement slabs causes the curling and warping of the slab. The natural response causes the concrete pavement to crack at regular intervals. A fundamental feature of concrete pavement is to introduce a jointing system to control the location of these expected cracks. Contraction joints are designed specifically for controlling the location of these types of cracks.

Figure 3. Concrete Shrinkage Cracking [21]

The contraction joint system assures crack control in new concrete pavement. However, certain design or construction factors may influence the effectiveness of a contraction joint system. Unexpected changes in the weather during and after construction can induce uncontrolled cracking despite the adoption of a proper jointing system. Because of the complexity of interrelated factors, uncontrolled cracks will occur in some concrete pavements. Theses cracks generally develop within the first 30 to 45 days.

4.2.3. Cracking in Construction Joints

Concrete slabs crack when tensile stresses within the concrete overcome the tensile strength. At early ages, the tensile stresses develop from restraint of the concrete's volume changes or slab bending from the temperature and moisture gradient through the concrete. Each transverse and longitudinal saw cut induces a plane of weakness where a crack will initiate and then propagate to the bottom of the slab. Uncontrolled cracking can be controlled by adopting the following precautionary measures:

There is an optimum time to saw contraction joints in new concrete pavements, which is defined as the sawing window. It represents a short period after the placement of concrete within which concrete can be cut successfully before it cracks in an uncontrolled manner. If the sawing of the joints is started too early then it may lead to raveling along the cut. The jagged, rough edges are termed as raveling. Some raveling is acceptable if the widening of the saw cut for filling joint sealant would remove the raveled edge. If the raveling is too severe, it will affect the appearance and ability to seal the joint. If the sawing of joints is delayed beyond a certain period when significant concrete shrinkage occurs then it may induce random cracks within the pavement.

The influence of the saw cut depth on early cracking primarily depends upon the time of sawing. Early sawing of the joints may require lesser saw-cut depths for preventing random cracking. Generally, the saw-cut depth is kept as 0.25 to 0.33 times the depth of the slab. If the depth of the saw-cut is less than the required depth then it may not sufficiently weaken the concrete at that location and it may ultimately lead to cracking elsewhere. This is also a very common type of crack propagation in bus pads as the length of the bus pad is usually much longer than the width; therefore, they always require construction joints in a transverse direction.

Figure 4. Sawcut induced crack

Furthermore, in terms of joint spacing, theoretical and practical studies have shown that the optimum joint spacing depends upon the slab thickness, concrete aggregates, subbase, and climate. Pavement with long transverse joint spacing may crack at locations other than the saw cuts due to tensile stresses from temperature curling.

Figure 5. Concrete joint spacing *[22]*

On the other hand, the temperature relates to the strength gain of the concrete and partly controls the time of initiating the saw cut and final time before the onset of cracking. The sawing of joints should be completed before the concrete surface temperature begins to fall since thermal contraction begins as soon as the concrete temperature falls.

Figure 6. Curing conditions *[23]*

The heat development profile of a concrete mix can be obtained by using concrete maturity meters. Monitoring of the concrete surface temperature will let us know the concrete strength and also the point when surface temperature begins to decline.

4.2.4. Weather and Ambient Conditions

The weather almost always has a role in the occurrence of uncontrolled cracking. Air temperature, wind, relative humidity, and sunlight all influence concrete hydration and shrinkage. These factors may heat or cool concrete or draw moisture from exposed concrete surfaces. Concrete paved in early morning will often reach higher temperatures than concrete paved during the late morning or afternoon because it receives more radiant heat. As a result, concrete paved during the morning will generally have a shorter sawing window, and often will exhibit more instances of uncontrolled cracking.

Plastic shrinkage cracking is a result of rapid drying of concrete pavement surface due to either a high ambient temperature, high wind velocity, low humidity or a combination of these factors. These cracks are generally tight and appear in the form of parallel groups perpendicular to the

direction of the wind soon after the placement of concrete Adequate curing measures are necessary to prevent their occurrence.

4.2.5. Blowups

Blowups are compressive joint failures brought about by excessive expansion related to high temperatures, high moisture contents, or a combination of the two. Blowups may occur gradually or may be sudden and dramatic. Failures are full depth and full lane width and can present serious hazards to traffic. Blowups become likely when normal joint movement is restricted by infiltration. An increase in concrete volume brought about by elevated temperatures and moisture contents creates longitudinal thrust that may overcome the compressive strength of the weakest joint in the section. Blowup tendency is more pronounced on pavements with long slabs where individual joint movements are greatest. Joints typically fail in the lower portions first. This failure provides an inclined plane for the slabs to slide upward when further expansion occurs. A sudden and dramatic blowup can occur when the upper portion shears off with little or no warning. Most blowups occur during a significant hot spell and usually in the afternoon.

4.2.6. Cracks Over Dowel Bars

Fine hairline to moderately wide cracks may develop sometimes over the dowel bars. The length of the cracks may be as long as the length of the dowels. These cracks are mostly surface cracks with 25 mm to 40 mm depth from the slab surface. However, in some cases, these cracks may penetrate up to the surface of the dowel bars. These cracks may not affect the load transfer capacity of the dowel bar assembly, but gradually the spalling of these cracks may lead to deterioration of the slab surface over the dowel locations. Possible reasons for such cracks are too little or too much vibration of the dowel bar inserter unit, stiff concrete mix, shallow depth of dowel bars, and natural phenomenon of settling heavy solids in a liquid medium around dowels. Inadequate vibration of the DBI unit and stiff concrete mix may leave a dowel trail in which the concrete is not compacted properly. Subsequently concrete settles down within the trail and creates a crack over the dowel location. Too much vibration of the DBI unit may create segregation of aggregates in the dowel trail resulting in too much accumulation of slurry and water in the trail over the dowel. This may cause excessive shrinkage of concrete at these locations leading to cracking. Also, the surface concrete over the dowel locations becomes weak due to a high water cement ratio, leading to an abrasion of mortar from the surface.

4.2.7. Surface Popouts

A popout is a conical fragment that breaks out of the surface of the concrete leaving a hole that may vary in size. Usually a fractured aggregate particle will be found at the bottom of the hole, with part of the aggregate still adhering to the point of the popout cone. The cause of a popout is a piece of porous rock having high water absorption and relatively low specific gravity. As the offending aggregate absorbs moisture, its swelling creates internal pressure sufficient to rupture the concrete surface. Pyrite, hard-burned dolomite, coal, shale, soft fine-grained limestone, clay lumps, or chert commonly cause popouts. They may also be caused by water uptake of expensive gel formed during the chemical reaction between the alkali hydroxide in the concrete and reactive siliceous aggregates. Most popouts appear within the first year after placement. Popouts caused by an alkali-silica reaction may occur as early as a few hours to a few weeks, or even a year, after placement of concrete. Popouts caused by moisture-induced swelling may occur shortly after placement due to the absorption of water from the plastic concrete or they may not appear until after a season of high humidity or rainfall. Popouts are considered a cosmetic detraction and generally do not affect the service life of the concrete.

4.2.8. Curb Cracking

Curb cracking mainly occurs wherever the curbs are cast monolithically with a concrete pavement slab and bus pads. It may also be observed, though not so predominantly, on the curbs laid cast-in situ with curb casting machines but not casted monolithically with the slabs. In both cases, cuts are provided into curb stones just opposite the transverse joints of the pavement to allow the expansion and contraction of the curbs. If the joint of these curbs is blocked by soil, stone grits and other material then the expansion of curbs along with concrete slabs becomes difficult, and due to excessive compressive stresses, curbs may crack.

4.3. Solutions and Repair Methodology

As discussed, repairing concrete pavement slabs and bus pads is always difficult and costly as compared to asphalt or other flexible pavements. However, the strength and durability of rigid pavements, in most cases, make them more feasible and cost-effective in the long term. Depending on the type of defects, the method of repair differs; therefore, it's important to first figure out the cause and type of defects in order to choose the best solution for repairing. A list of repair methods of concrete pavements is as follows:

4.3.1. Full-Depth Repair

Full-depth repair is a concrete pavement restoration technique that can be used to restore the structural integrity and reliability to concrete pavements having certain types of distress. It involves making lane-width, full-depth saw cuts to remove the deteriorated concrete down to the base, repairing the disturbed base, installing load-transfer devices, and refilling the excavated area with new concrete. It is an effective, permanent treatment to repair pavement distresses, particularly those that occur at or near joints and cracks. By removing and replacing isolated areas of deterioration, full-depth repairs may delay or stop further deterioration and restore the pavement close to its original condition. The distresses that can be addressed using full-depth repairs include transverse cracking, corner breaks, longitudinal cracking, deteriorated joints, Dcracking, blowups, and punchouts.

4.3.2. Selection of patch size

It is important that the boundaries be located so that all significant distresses are removed. Deterioration near joints and cracks may be greater at the bottom of the slab than at the top. Therefore, further investigation should be performed. The location of patch boundaries also depends on the level of load transfer which is to be provided. The patches must be of sufficient size to eliminate rocking and longitudinal cracking of the patch. A minimum patch length of 1.75 m and full-lane patch width of 3.5 m is recommended to provide stability and prevent longitudinal cracking. For the same reason, the minimum remainder of the slab must be at least 1.75 m for a 3.5 m wide slab. However, if the distressed areas in both lanes are similar and both lanes are to be repaired, aligning repair boundaries to avoid small offsets and maintain continuity may be desirable.

Patch surface may be textured so that it is similar to the surface of the surrounding pavement. The first few hours after pouring the concrete are the most critical for good curing. Therefore, a liquid-membrane-forming curing compound should be applied immediately after texturing over the surface of newly placed concrete. To prevent moisture loss and protect the surface against the occurrence of plastic shrinkage cracks, a polythene sheet may be placed over the patch surface.

The outer boundaries of a repair should be cut by a diamond blade saw cut machine. Deteriorated concrete from the repair area may be removed either by lifting out or breaking up. It is preferable to lift the deteriorated concrete whenever possible. Lifting the old concrete imparts no damage to the subbase and is usually faster and requires less labor than any method that breaks the concrete before removal. For lifting out, holes are drilled into the old concrete surface, then lift pins are

inserted into holes and concrete is removed with the help of chains fastened to a crane. Deteriorated concrete may also be removed by breaking it into small pieces. The drawback of this method is that it often damages the subbase. If the subbase has been damaged during the removal operation of the old concrete then it would be necessary to repair it by adding and compacting new subbase material.

The final step is to saw transverse and longitudinal joint sealant reservoirs at the patch boundaries. Sealed joints will lower the potential for spalling at the patch joints. The joints may be filled with any suitable joint sealant.

4.3.3. Placing & finishing the new concrete

Place and evenly spread pavement quality concrete to the appropriate surcharge. Thoroughly compact the concrete using internal vibrators and then finish the surface with the help of a screed vibrator. Particular care should be taken to ensure full compaction around the dowel bars and edges of the repair. The patch surface should match the surrounding surface profile.

4.3.4. Cross-Stitching

Cross-stitching is a repair technique for longitudinal cracks which are in reasonably good condition. The purpose of cross-stitching is to maintain aggregate interlock and provide added reinforcement and strength. The tie bars used in cross-stitching prevent the crack from vertical and horizontal movement or widening. This technique knits the cracked portions of the slab together and reduces the chances of the crack to grow further.

Cross-stitching uses deformed tie bars drilled across a crack at angles of 30-45 degrees. Deformed steel bars of 10-12 mm diameter are sufficient to hold the crack tightly closed and enhance aggregate interlock. Full depth holes of 18-20 mm diameter are drilled at a pitch distance of 300 mm with the offset of 150 mm from the crack. The holes are drilled alternately from each side of the crack so that one-hole passes through the crack from left to right while the next from right to left. After drilling, the holes are flushed with high pressure air to clean out any residual dust. Then a high strength epoxy gel adhesive is injected into the holes. Immediately after injecting epoxy, deformed steel rods are inserted into each hole. The crack is sealed at the top with a silicon sealant.

4.3.5. Slab Replacement

In cases where a slab has full depth and intersecting multiple cracks, slab replacement become necessary. It involves the demolition and replacement of the affected slab. Prior to breaking out of the affected slab, a full depth saw cut should be made around the perimeter of the repair to minimize the damage to the surrounding slab. This should include the existing transverse joints on both sides. Care should be taken to ensure that the saw cut does not extend into adjacent slabs. If it accidentally happens then the cut into the adjacent slab should be repaired with epoxy mortar. The concrete of the affected slab may then be sawn into smaller pieces before being broken up and removed from the slab. The concrete that remains in the corner of the patch after saw cutting should be broken out carefully to avoid undercutting the remaining slab. Reinstatement of the sub-base, if required, should be done by taking care of full compaction especially in the corners. A plate vibrator should be used to compact the subbase. Fixing of dowels into drilled holes, placing, compacting, finishing, texturing and curing of fresh concrete into the patch will be as described in the full-depth repair section.

4.3.6. Concluding Remarks

Many types of cracks such as uncontrolled transverse full-depth cracks, plastic shrinkage cracks, full-depth cracks near slab culverts, cracks over dowel bars, etc., have been observed on the concrete road projects that have been completed recently. All such cracks can be prevented or minimized by making the site staff aware of the precautions to be taken during concrete paving. Due care during construction can reduce the troubles which otherwise would be very difficult and costly to remove after the concrete has set.

4.4. Existing Pavement Design Methods

4.4.1. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

The AASHTO Pavement Design Guide was based on the field testing of flexible and rigid pavement structures in Ottawa, Illinois, in the late 1950s and early 1960s [24] [25]. This empirically based pavement design procedure is used by many practicing engineers worldwide. The AASHTO guide is based on the performance of the test sections under truck traffic and environmental conditions. One major output of the AASHO Road Test was the load equivalency factor (LEF) concept. LEFs were used to quantify the damage different axle loads and configurations caused to the pavement relative to an 80 kN single axle load (dual wheels). The

equivalent single axle load (ESAL) was developed to be the total number of passes of an 80 kN standard axle. ESALs are calculated by multiplying and summing each individual axle load and configuration by its corresponding LEF for a particular pavement structure. One shortcoming of rigid pavement LEFs is that they are based on the performance of the AASHTO Road Test concrete pavements, most of which failed due to pumping and erosion. This type of failure is not the predominant failure mode in many rigid pavement structures, and many rigid pavements fail because of faulting and fatigue cracking.

4.4.2. Portland Cement Association (PCA)

The latest versions of the Portland Cement Association (PCA) thickness design for concrete highway and street pavements have more mechanistic features than the empirically based AASHTO guide [26] [27]. The PCA uses the load spectra analysis to calculate the bending stress in the concrete due to various axle loads and configurations. Load spectra analysis is more theoretically sound than ESAL analysis because fundamental stresses and strains are calculated and related to the performance of laboratory concrete fatigue beam tests. Load spectra analysis also allows for calculation of pavement stresses due to an axle load and configuration not originally considered in the AASHO Road Test. The PCA guide also has many limitations, such as not taking into account temperature stresses in the slab, no ability to analyze widened lanes or different joint spacings, top of the base k-value concept, and no consideration of load transfer across the shoulder-lane joint. The top of the base k-value concept refers to increasing the apparent strength of the subgrade based on the thickness and type of base material.

In this research a numerical method will be employed and verified with experimental results. The soil and slab stiffnesses will be taken into account and a more realistic method to apply moving and temperature loads will be used to analyze load distribution, soil pressure, and the slab strength.

4.5. Fatigue Design

A number of experimental and numerical studies have been conducted on fatigue resistance of concrete pavements, and several models have been proposed to design rigid pavement for repetitive loads. For instance, Roesler [28] proposed the following equation to determine number of load application until failure for a concrete pavement subjected to fatigue loads:

$$
N_f = \left[\frac{1.2968}{(\sigma/MOR)}\right]^{32.57}
$$
 Equation 1

Where Nf = number of load application until failure, σ = applied maximum stress level, and MOR = modulus of rupture of the concrete.

Another equation was proposed by Dater [29] which was derived out of 140 fatigue beam results from three published works including Kesler [30], [31], [32]:

$$
Log(N_f) = 17.61 - 17.61 \left(\frac{\sigma}{MOR}\right)
$$
 Equation 2

The most recent model to predict number of loading cycles for concrete pavement subjected to fatigue loads was proposed in Mechanistic-Empirical Design of New and Rehabilitated Pavement Structures [33]:

$$
Log(N_f) = 2.0 \left[\frac{MOR}{\sigma} \right]^{1.22}
$$
 Equation 3

[Equation 3](#page-28-2) was also used by [34] to verify their results to predict longitudinal fatigue cracking in rigid pavements.

5. Numerical Model and Verification

5.1. Computer Simulation Tool

In this study SAP2000 is used to develop the numerical model and analyze the concrete bus pads. SAP2000 follows in the same tradition, featuring a sophisticated, intuitive and versatile user interface powered by an unmatched analysis engine and design tools for engineers working on transportation, industrial, public works, sports, and other facilities. From its 3D object based graphical modeling environment to the wide variety of analysis and design options completely integrated across one powerful user interface, SAP2000 has proven to be the most integrated, productive and practical purpose structural program on the market today. Advanced analytical techniques allow for large deformation analysis, Eigen and Ritz analyses based on stiffness of nonlinear cases, catenary cable analysis, material nonlinear analysis with fiber hinges, multilayered nonlinear shell element, buckling analysis, progressive collapse analysis, energy methods for drift control, velocity-dependent dampers, base isolators, support plasticity and nonlinear segmental construction analysis [35].

Shell Element

To simulate the concrete bus pad, the Shell element is used in SAP2000. Shell is a three- or fournode area object used to model membrane and plate-bending behavior. Shell objects are useful for simulating floor, wall, and bridge deck systems; 3D curved surfaces; and components within structural members, such the web and flanges of a W-Section. Shells may be homogeneous or

layered throughout their thickness. Temperature-dependent, orthotropic, and nonlinear material properties may be assigned to layered shells.

Figure 7. Shell element, local axis and face numbers

There are two types of Shell element in SAP2000, thick and thin; the latter one was employed in this numerical study. The inclusion of transverse shear deformation in plate-bending behavior is the main difference between thin and thick shell formulation. Thin-plate formulation follows a Kirchhoff application, which neglects transverse shear deformation, whereas thick-plate formulation follows Mindlin/Reissner [36], which does account for shear behavior. Thick-plate formulation has no effect upon membrane (in-plane) behavior, only plate-bending (out-of-plane) behavior. Shear deformation tends to be important when shell thickness is greater than approximately 1/5 to 1/10 of the span of plate-bending curvature.

5.2. Modelling of Soil Behavior

For analysis of beams and slabs resting on a soil medium, engineers have been using a classical mathematical model called the Winkler model, in which the behavior of the soil is simplified by means of fictitious springs placed continuously underneath the structure. The corresponding spring constant k is called ''the modulus of subgrade reaction of the soil.'' [37]. The Winkler's idealization represents the soil medium as a system of identical but mutually independent, closely spaced, discrete, and linearly elastic springs. According to this idealization, deformation of foundation due to applied load is confined to loaded regions only. The pressure-deflection relationship at any point is given by $p=k.\delta$, where k is modulus of subgrade reaction and δ is deflection.

The subgrade reaction is not only a fundamental soil property [38]. It is a lump constant of which the subgrade reaction from the plate load test should be adjusted because the subgrade reaction is a function of:

1. Soil elastic properties, both the initial response and the long-term response due to soil consolidation from the sustained loading.

2. Loading intensity that will influence the long-term consolidation settlement.

3. Amount of surface area loaded and load shape over which the load is applied. Wider and larger area loadings will involve consolidation of the deeper soil layers.

4. Stiffness of the slab, which will influence the distribution of the soil bearing pressure.

Subgrade Winkler model

Figure 8. Winkler soil-slab model

As Terzaghi mentioned, proper estimation of contact pressure for a flexible foundation could be very cumbersome, so it is assumed that subgrade modulus ("k" or "ks") remains constant for the entire footing. In other words, the ratio between pressure and settlement at all locations of a footing will remain constant. Therefore, the displacement diagram of a footing with a load at center will have a dishing effect. A point at the center of the footing will experience the highest displacement. Displacement reduces as it moves away from the center [39] [40].

Bowles stated in his book [41] that it is difficult to make a plate-load test except for very small plates because of the reaction load required. Even with small plates of, say, 450-, 600-, and 750 mm diameter it is difficult to obtain 8 since the plate tends to be less than rigid so that a constant deflection across the plate (and definition of k_s) is difficult to obtain. Stacking the smaller plates

concentric with the larger ones tends to increase the rigidity, but in any case, the plot is of load divided by plate contact area (nominal P/A) and the average measured deflection.

It is important to obtain the k_s from the soil tests on site; however, due to the constraints such as cost and time, it is not always easy and possible to use the modulus of subgrade from test. [Table](#page-31-0) [1](#page-31-0) shows the range of modulus of subgrade reaction, ks, for different types of soils, recommended by Bowles [41]. In this project due to the lack of geotechnical tests and soil properties information, the recommended values shown in [Table 1](#page-31-0) are used in the numerical model. Based on the soil condition of the site, the k_s is considered to be 20,000 kN/m³ (127.32 kip/ft³), as medium dense sand.

Line and Area Springs in SAP2000

There are two types of springs that can be used for modelling soil in SAP2000, 1) linear spring, 2) area spring. The linear springs must be connected to the nodes that are connected to the shell or plate as foundation or pavement, and area springs are used to model soil under a meshed shell/plate element. In this study, the linear springs were used to model the soil based on the Winkler model. When line or area springs are assigned to an object, SAP2000 generates equivalent joint springs at each node created. Joint-spring stiffness is determined from tributary area and the line- or area-spring stiffness which is assigned to the object. As a result, joint springs which support interior joints are stiffer than those at corner joints. Since contact pressure is proportional to joint-spring deformation and the displacement of those joints to which springs

are attached, users may obtain contact pressure through the product of spring-stiffness constant and displacement, available for output in both graphic and tabular format.

The Winkler spring method assumes that the slab sits on vertical linear springers representing the deformable (linear elastic) soil. The stiffness coefficient of a Winkler spring k_s is expressed as the product of the area A_s of the portion of the slab influenced by the spring (the tributary area) and the parameter modulus of subgrade reaction k_s [\(Figure 9\)](#page-32-1), which is defined as:

$$
k_s = \frac{q}{w}
$$

Where q is the foundation pressure exerted to the soil and w is the resulting settlement [42].

Figure 9. Computational model of the Winkler spring analysis approach

5.3. Model Geometry

Based on the field measurement, the dimensions and proportions of the concrete bus pads in the numerical model are 10 feet wide by 34 feet long [\(Figure 10\)](#page-33-0). However, the existing design of the bus pad in Baltimore is a little different from the as-built dimensions, according to [Figure 11.](#page-34-2) In order to ensure the accuracy of the results and include the exact tire footprint, mesh sizes are considered to be very fine with a max size of 0.415 ft. The size and proportion of the slab along with the thickness significantly influence the load distribution due to the interaction between soil and pavement. Thus, designing an appropriate size of slabs for the bus pad and considering the accurate soil properties will help to precisely analyze internal forces and moments as well as deflection and soil pressure to predict concrete surface cracking and failure of the bus pad.

Figure 10. The SAP2000 model dimensions, meshing, and element labels

As seen in [Figure 11,](#page-34-2) the existing bus pad design shows a two-way welded wire mesh with No. 2 GA with a size of 6 inches by 12 inches, for reinforcing the concrete slab which must be placed at top face. Dimensions of the mesh are also indicated in this drawing for different lane widths. Given the limited size of each welded wire mesh, an overlap of 14 inches is also considered for the reinforcement. The concrete cover from the top face must be 2 inches to the center of the wire mesh and a longitudinal tie device is also placed at the joints where each slab ends. Based on this design, a denser mesh is required in longitudinal axis with 6 inches spacing, and 12 inches spacing must be considered in the transverse direction. In order to evaluate this design, a comparison between the existing design and required size and reinforcement based on the finite element analysis and test will be performed and details will be analyzed and discussed in the conclusion and design recommendation sections.

Figure 11. Placement of bar mats reinforced concrete pavement (City of Baltimore Department of Transportation)

5.4. Loading Scenarios

5.4.1. Load Cases

Different load cases are considered in the numerical model, including dead load, moving load, and temperature load. The self-weight of the concrete slab is applied as uniform distributed load as dead load with slab thickness of 12 inches and normal weight concrete. The design parameters for three bus categories – large bus, mid-size bus, and an articulated bus – were studied. Other small vehicles may also be used for transit services but generally their characteristics are not critical in designing bus pads. This report focuses on the six transit bus types shown in [Table 2,](#page-35-0) herein referred to by their nominal lengths. While this study evaluated various buses, the City of Baltimore primarily has five transit bus types in its fleet including 2-axle and 3-axle buses.

Table 2. Scope of Transit Buses [43]

Transit Bus	Transit Bus Type	Actual	Conceptual Representation
$\rm ID$	(Nominal Length)	Length (ft)	
\mathbf{i}	2-axle 35-foot buses	32.5-37.4	
$\ddot{\rm ii}$	2-axle 40-foot buses	37.5-42.4	
iii	2-axle 45-foot buses	42.5-47.5	
iv	3-axle 45-foot buses	42.5-47.5	
$\mathbf V$	3-axle 45-foot double- deck buses	42.5-47.5	
vi	3-axle 60-foot articulated buses	55.0-65.0	

Federal weight regulations for Commercial Motor Vehicles (CMV) are applicable to interstate highways and 160,000 miles of other major roads. State- and locally controlled roads often have separate regulations that differ from federal regulations. [Table 3](#page-36-0) displays the transit bus single and tandem axle weight limits for each state. This table shows that most states govern transit bus weights under CMV regulations; however, 14 states have separate transit bus weight limits [43].

Table 3. State-specific transit bus axle weight limits [43]

After the study on buses' weight and load characteristics of buses in different states, AASHTO loads were compared with actual bus loads. Since AASHTO provides more critical loading conditions, the Equivalent Single Axle Load (ESAL) method was used. Although it is not too difficult to determine a wheel or an axle load for an individual vehicle, it becomes quite complicated to determine the number and types of wheel/axle loads that a particular pavement will be subject to over its design life. *Furthermore, it is not the wheel load but rather the damage to the pavement caused by the wheel load that is of primary concern.* The most common historical approach is to convert damage from wheel loads of various magnitudes and repetitions ("mixed traffic") to damage from an equivalent number of "standard" or "equivalent" loads. [Figure 12](#page-38-0) shows AASHTO design truck, tandem, and lane loads that are considered in the present numerical model. According to AASHTO, the greater of the load combinations of the truck plus lane load, and tandem plus lane load must be applied.

Figure 12. AASHTO design truck, (a) HL-93 vehicular live load, (b) AASHTO truck and lane load combination, (c) AASHTO tandem and lane load combination, (d) AASHTO HL-93 truck tire plan

Regarding the temperature, calculations of the Stresses from Temperature using the Formula Using the Temperature Graph above for T_{Δ} and the formula for stresses in the x and y (σ_x , σ_y)

$$
\sigma_x = \frac{E \alpha_t T_\Delta}{1 - \mu^2} \left(C_x + \mu C_y \right), \quad \sigma_y = \frac{E \alpha_t T_\Delta}{1 - \mu^2} \left(C_y + \mu C_x \right) \tag{Equation 4}
$$

 C_y = .52 Normalized Dimension in Y direction using Bradbury (1938) Chart

 $C_x = 1.02$ Normalized Dimension in X direction using Bradbury (1938) Chart μ = Poisson's Ratio

 T_{Δ} = Change in Temperature (Max Temperature - Average Low Temperature)

- $E =$ Modulus of Elasticity
- α_t = Coefficient of thermal expansion
- σ_x = Stress Caused by Temperature in X Direction

$\sigma_{\rm v}$ = Stress Caused by Temperature in Y Direction

The graph below was created using the record height temperature and the average low temperature to show the extreme scenarios that caused the maximum stress in the concrete slab.

STAY SAFE Get timely weather alerts for Baltimore/BWI Arpt, MD right in your browser!									Turn on weather alerts		
Average High		Average Low	Record High		Record Low		Average Precipitation				
				74°F	83°F	87°F 67° F	85°F 65° F	78°F	67° F		
41° F	45°F 27° F	$54^{\circ}F$ 34°F	65° F 43°F	$52^{\circ}F$	62° F			58°F	45°F	56° F 37°F	45°F 28°F
$24^{\circ}F$ 79°F	83°F	90° F	$94^{\circ}F$	98°F	105° F	$107^{\circ}F$	$105^{\circ}F$	101°F	97°F	86°F	77°F
-7° F	-7° F	5°F	15° F	32°F	40° F	50° F	45°F	$35^{\circ}F$	$25^{\circ}F$	$12^{\circ}F$	$-3^{\circ}F$
3.05 in	3 in	3.9 in	3.19 in	3.99 in	3.46 in	4.07 in	3.29 in	4.03 in	3.33 in	3.3 in	3.37 in
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	July is on average the WARMEST month. January is on average the COOLEST month.										

Figure 13. Temperature Chart for Baltimore City for 2017

Based on [Equation 4](#page-38-1) the thermal stress σ_x , σ_y , in X and Y directions were calculated and listed in [Table 1](#page-31-0) and [Figure 14.](#page-40-0) The maximum σ_x , σ_y can be seen in July with 2.65 MPa and 4.32 MPa respectively, while the minimum values can be obtained in January with 0.96 MPa, and 1.56 MPa.

Table 4. Thermal Stress in different months for X and Y directions for a rigid pavement

Month	σ_{r} (MPa)	σ_{v} (MPa)
January	0.96	1.56
February	1.09	1.79
March	1.44	2.36
April	1.76	2.87
May	2.07	3.38
June	2.48	4.05
July	2.65	4.32
August	2.55	4.17
September	2.29	3.73
October	1.88	3.07
November	1.42	2.32
December	0.99	1.61

Figure 14. Thermal stress calculated based on [Equation 4](#page-38-1) for different months in a year

5.4.2. Load Combinations

According to AASHTO, the total factored force effect shall be taken as:

 $Q = \sum \eta_i \gamma_i Q_i$

Where η_i is load modifier, Q_i is force effect, and γ_i is load factor.

The Strength I load factors, based on Table 3.4.1-1 and Table 3.4.1.-2 of AASHTO, are used, with the maximum of 1.25 load factor for dead load and 1.75 for moving live load. The temperature loads are applied as uniform temperature and the minimum and maximum load factor of 0.5 and 1.2 respectively. More than 130 load combinations are examined in order to extract the most critical load scenario to analyze and design the concrete slab.

 \sim

 \sim

 \pm 4

Table 5. AASHTO load combinations and load factors, Table 3.4.1-1

 \overline{a}

 \overline{a}

 \sim

 \sim

To simulate the moving load of a truck on the bus pad slab, 44 different scenarios were considered based on the location of the truck tires on the slab. A total of 131 load combinations was defined and employed in the simulation, and they are provided in [Table 6,](#page-42-0) where DL is dead load, LL is combination of truck and lane load, and T is temperature load.

Table 6. Defining load combinations

5.5. Finite Element Results

5.5.1 Slab Analysis

In designing a floor slab and mat foundation in buildings, there are two different types of slabs, 1) one-way slab, 2) two-way slab. A one-way slab is mainly supported from two sides and the bending only occurs in one direction, but a two-way slab is supported by four sides (beams or walls) and the slab bends in two directions. Modelling a concrete slab on flexible springs reveals that the behavior of the slab is similar to a two-way slab, as there is bending in two directions.

In the present work, the analyses of concrete bus pads for 131 load combinations were performed and maximum results are provided in [Figure 15.](#page-43-0) In SAP2000, local and global coordination systems can be defined. The local coordination system depends on orientation of shell elements and the global coordination system is specified for the entire model. Based on the local coordination systems, forces and moment about different axes can be extracted from the results. In the present model, M11, which is the moment in local axis "1," represents the moment in longitudinal axis, and M22 represents the moment in transverse axis. The finite element model consists of 2,125 nodes and 2,016 shell elements. Due to the large size output data, the moment results of 131 load combinations for four shell elements were extracted and provided in Appendix A. The maximum M11 and M22 for both negative and positive moments are extracted from the 131 load combinations which can be seen in [Figure 15.](#page-43-0) *The maximum positive moment in longitudinal axis is 8.25 kips-ft which occurs in load combination 20, and the maximum*

negative moment in longitudinal axis is -5.0 kips-ft which occurs in load combination 17. For the transverse direction, the maximum positive and negative moments are 5.0 and -3 kips-ft. respectively, occurring in load combination 6.

Figure 15. Maximum moment results among the 131 load combinations for AASHTO equivalent truck load with k_s =20,000 kN/m³, (a) maximum negative longitudinal moment, (b) maximum positive longitudinal moment, (c) maximum negative transverse moment, (d) maximum positive longitudinal moment.

*Note: There are 18 different types of buses currently in service in Maryland Transit Administration bus service and the most common type is ID (ii) indicated in Table 2. However due to the greater load effect on bus pad design, the AASHTO equivalent truck load is considered in the present study.

5.5.2 Slab Bending Strength and Required Reinforcement

In order to redesign and evaluate the existing design of the slab, the strip method is used along with the strength limit state for flexural reinforced concrete members according to ACI 318 [44] Building Code Requirements for Structural Concrete. The comparison is conducted for a flexural member with a unit width and height of slab's thickness. A list of different design cases is provided in [Figure 16](#page-44-0) for the same slab thickness which is the thickness of the existing bus pad, and different reinforcements. This reinforcement can be considered for both negative and/or positive moments, depending on the requirement extracted from the FE analysis. Nine different reinforcements are analyzed and nominal moments are calculated. Moment at crack (M_{cr}) is also determined for the section where the concrete in tension cracks based on the rupture point (f_r) in concrete. As seen in this figure, up to the 2#3 reinforcement case, the calculated nominal moments are less than M_{cr} ; that means the reinforcement cannot effectively increase the strength, but it makes a little enhancement in the deflection response of the slab, reducing the deflection by considering the steel rebar and transforming section.

Figure 16. Calculation of nominal moment for slab sections with different reinforcement

5.5.3 Effect of soil stiffness and subgrade modulus

In addition to the concrete slab stiffness, the soil characteristics and particularly the soil stiffness significantly affect the load distribution on the slab. Stiffer soils and stiffer slabs provide strong support, and that distributes the load more uniformly, while more flexible soil distributes the load more locally and less uniformly. A parametric study was conducted using the numerical models to examine six (6) different subgrade modulus and figure out the effect of subgrade modulus on the load distribution and eventually the maximum positive and negative moment of the slab. [Figure 17](#page-45-0) shows the correlation between the subgrade modulus and moment for both positive and negative in longitudinal axis. It can be seen that the negative and positive moments significantly decrease when the subgrade modulus increases because the stiffer soils can distribute the load more uniformly, and consequently the maximum moment decreases.

Figure 17. Effect of subgrade modulus on the maximum slab moment, (a) subgrade modulus versus negative longitudinal moment, (b) subgrade modulus versus positive longitudinal moment.

6. Field Study and Lab Investigation

A concrete bus pad needs to be designed as a rigid pavement. According to the AASHTO Guide for Design of Pavement Structures [45], rigid pavements generally consist of a prepared roadbed underlying a layer of subbase and pavement slab. The subbase may be stabilized or unstabilized. In cases of low volume road design where truck traffic is low, a subbase layer may not be necessary between the prepared roadbed and the pavement slab. The basic materials in the pavement slab are Portland cement concrete, reinforcing steel, load transfer devices, and joint sealing materials. The reinforcing steel used in the slab should have surface deformations

adequate to bond and develop the working stresses in the steel. For smooth wire mesh, this bond is developed through the welded cross wires, and for deformed wire fabric, the bond is developed by deformations on the wire and the welded intersections.

6.1. Identification of Crack Types

After visiting a number of concrete bus pads in Baltimore, we identified two major causes for surface cracks: 1) plastic settlement of the subgrade, 2) cracks due to negative moment of the slab section. [Figure 18a](#page-46-0) shows a surface crack on a concrete bus pad that also can be observed on asphalt pavement. The continuous transverse crack in concrete and asphalt is due to the settlement caused by either a lack of proper compaction of soil or placing specific infrastructure (e.g., ducts or manholes) underneath the subgrade. [Figure 18b](#page-46-0) illustrates construction of joints between two bus pad slabs. Unacceptable soil compaction and surface leveling were observed, which can cause settlement (concrete surface crack) and nonuniform slab section, respectively.

Figure 18. Subgrade differential settlement, (a) continuous surface crack on asphalt pavement and concrete bus pad, (b) poor leveling of subgrade surface before concrete pouring at joints

The negative moment resulting from the force (tire pressure of buses or trucks) is another major factor that causes concrete surface cracks. [Figure 19](#page-47-0) illustrates where buses usually stop on the bus pad and the transverse surface cracks due to the tire pressure of buses that creates negative moment and tension in the concrete top face. Due to the two-way slab action of the bus pad, both positive and negative moments must be controlled; however, in most cases the negative moments create the observable cracks on the top surface of the concrete bus pad, and positive moments

mainly create tension forces at the bottom face, which can cause cracks at the interface between the concrete slab and subgrade.

Figure 19. Concrete surface crack due to the slab negative moment, (a) tension cracks at the expected location with maximum negative moment, (b) longitudinal tension forces due to the negative moment and major cracks on concrete, (c) positive and negative moment due to the tire pressure on the concrete slab

According to the bus pad design and drawing previously provided, a welded wire mesh No. 2 GA must be provided at top in the concrete cross section with 2 inches cover from the top face. This was designed to control the negative moment that was previously discussed. The sufficiency of this welded mesh will be discussed in the next section; this section focuses on field observation and construction issues. The construction process for the Baltimore concrete bus pads consists of:

- 1) cut and remove the asphalt pavement,
- 2) soil compaction,
- 3) placing the joints and side forms if needed,
- 4) pouring concrete and placing welded wire mesh during pouring,
- 5) finishing.

As can be seen in [Figure 20,](#page-48-0) since the welded wire mesh is placed on the wet concrete surface, it can be easily moved down due to the workers weight or even the weight of the concrete that is being poured on the top. This causes inaccurate placement of wire mesh in the bus pad cross section and can reduce the flexural strength of the slab.

Figure 20. Bus pad concrete pouring and wire mesh placement, (a) no use of spacer and inaccurate placement of wire mesh during construction, (b) detailing of welded wire mesh and joints

6.2. Preparation of Test Specimens

In order to assess the strength of the constructed bus pad in Baltimore City, two strips in longitudinal and transverse directions were cut from an existing concrete bus pad to be tested at Morgan State University Structures Laboratory. The concrete strips are about 80 inches in length, 14-14.5 inches in width, and 9 inches thick as constructed. The aim is to evaluate the flexural strength of concrete slabs in longitudinal and transverse directions regardless of their boundary conditions. This evaluation will then be compared with the required flexural strength based on the finite element model results. It is assumed that these two strips represent the flexural strength of the bus pad slab in both directions; however, in order to increase the accuracy more test specimens are needed.

Figure 21. Preparation of test specimens

6.3. Test setup

The test specimens that were cut from the existing bus pad slab were transported to the Structures Laboratory at Morgan State University. In order to evaluate the flexural strength of the concrete section, a four-point bending test was performed as this can assess the section under pure moment. Two concentrated loads were applied at one-third of the span to create this pure moment in mid-span. Two overhangs were considered with 10 inches length from each side. The

Hi-Tech MAGNUS test frame was used for this experiment that consists of two horizontal and two vertical members made of steel to provide strong support for the test. Due to the limited stroke length of hydraulic cylinders to apply concentrated loads and in order to elevate the concrete specimen, additional beams were placed under the specimen during the test. Calibration was conducted for load and deflection before the test started to ensure the accuracy of test data. Five (5) linear variable displacement transducers (LVDTs) were used to measure the deflection at mid-span and 5 inches from the end supports. Two separate data acquisition systems were used to collect load and deflection measurements. Using the same load and time steps, the load and deflection were interactively assessed.

Figure 22. Test setup at Structures Laboratory, Morgan State University, (a) test specimen under fourpoint bending in Magnus test frame, (b) sudden failure of transverse strip at break point

6.4. Test Results of Longitudinal and Transverse Strips

After collecting the data from the data acquisition system, load and deflection were calibrated using calibration factors obtained in the previous step. The calibrated data were plotted as load versus deflection for both transverse and longitudinal specimens. These results were also compared with a theoretical calculation of elastic load-deflection for a reinforced concrete section with the same dimension and material properties. As seen in [Figure 23](#page-51-0) for Specimen #1 (transverse strip), the beam broke at 0.0055 inches deflection, which is about 45% of maximum deflection expected based on the existing design. However, it should be noted that based on the observation, no reinforcement was visible in this section after the test, and as can be seen in the plot, the beam was completely split due to the lack of reinforcement that caused sudden failure.

The longitudinal strip, Specimen #2, shows higher load (3,780 lbs.) and larger deflection (0.01185 inches), which is comparable with the theoretical fracture point.

Figure 23. Tests results of transverse and longitudinal specimens, (a) load-time response and comparison between theoretical calculation and test, (b) specimen #1/ transverse strip at break point, (c) specimen #2/ longitudinal strip at break point

The moment capacities of the test specimens were then calculated based on the maximum load at break point. The results are provided in [Figure 24](#page-52-0) for the four-point bending beam. The lengths are obtained for the actual measurement and P (load) values are based on the maximum applied concentrated load in tests for each side. Since the cross section of the specimens is 9 inches by

14 inches, the moment should be calculated for unit width as kips-ft/ft, in order to make it comparable with the results of finite element model.

Figure 24. Test results of transverse and longitudinal strips

As can be seen in [Figure 24,](#page-52-0) Specimen #1 shows lower flexural strength and capacity as compared to Specimen #2. This is due to a smaller longitudinal reinforcement ratio in the first specimen that was observed to be less than the designed steel reinforcement indicated in the drawings. It should be noted that Specimen #1 had sudden failure due to providing reinforcement less than the minimum required steel according to ACI-318. Furthermore, based on the drawing that was provided earlier in the report, the reinforcement ratio of longitudinal direction should be twice the transverse direction, due to the larger moment force. However, the observation from the test revealed that the larger rebar spacing (smaller reinforcement ratio) was incorrectly placed in the longitudinal direction instead of the transverse direction. Consequently, the cracking observed in these slabs is a direct function of how they were constructed; moreover, the slabs were constructed with insufficient reinforcement contrary to the plans to resist the anticipated wheel loads.

7. Conclusions and Design Recommendations

Based on the numerical and experimental studies as well as field observation and design/construction details, the findings are listed as follows regarding the causes of the bus pads' failure analyzed in this study for some roadways in Baltimore City:

Subgrade

- Subgrade settlement can cause much larger moment in the longitudinal and transverse axes of bus pad than design moment. This caused concrete surface cracking and slab failure in many of the bus pads observed in this study.
- Subgrade modulus significantly affects the moving load distribution and soil pressure which consequently changes both longitudinal and transverse moments by up to about 8 times. This means, poor compaction of the subgrade will sufficiently increase moment, something that is underestimated in the design, resulting in concrete surface cracks and failure of the bus pad.

Design and Reinforcement Placement

- Considering more realistic models for moving load and boundary conditions, the moment envelope of the numerical model was extracted and shows that the bus pad experiences 49% larger moment in longitudinal direction than the design moment.
- Placement of the longitudinal wire mesh was considered to be close to the top face of the concrete slab, but based on the numerical results, the maximum longitudinal moment is positive, which requires reinforcement to be close to the slab's bottom.
- As per the site observations, the concrete clear cover was not the same at different places of the slab, which was caused by concrete crews walking on the wire mesh during pouring. This results in varying the slab's flexural capacities, which can cause the concrete surface cracks at the top and bottom face of the bus pad.
- Concrete slab failure due to negative moment can be easily monitored and traced as cracks appear on the slab top face, but the failure due to positive moment cannot be identified and monitored as easily because positive moment cracks initiate from the bottom face of the slab and are not observable. Therefore, more attention needs to be paid in designing bus pad slab for positive moment.

Construction Tolerances and Best Practice Suggestions

- Construction and placement of transverse joints were not properly performed. This can initiate cracks and propagate them to the next slab's section.
- Poor leveling of the slab bed before pouring concrete was observed in the field during the construction, and that results in varying concrete slab depths (in some places depth was less than the design required as indicated in drawings). This can exponentially reduce flexural capacity of slab in both uncracked and cracked sections.

To address the aforementioned issues in the current design of concrete bus pads in Baltimore, and to make a more durable concrete slab toward designing sustainable transportation infrastructure, the following **recommendations** are proposed:

- **Subgrade compaction before pouring slab concrete**. Since most of the bus pads in Baltimore have been constructed in roads with flexible pavement, which are made of asphalt, and the construction of bus pads are mainly performed in existing roads, the asphalt needs to be cut and replaced before the concrete pad's construction is started. Therefore, the subgrade compaction usually is more difficult than soil compaction of a new road, and, as discussed earlier, it can significantly reduce the flexural capacity of the concrete bus pad. Thus, it is highly recommended to ensure the subgrade's compaction before pouring slab concrete. The compaction of edges and corners can be done using small compactors and a compaction test is necessary. In case that compaction of soil (subgrade) is not possible to achieve at the required compaction level, an alternative solution is to stabilize the soil using lime or cement which can be used in lower soil layers as well.
- Leveling. The surface of the subgrade and underneath of the concrete bus pad must be completely leveled. It is recommended to take an additional construction step to prepare a surface made of lean concrete, with a thickness of 2-3 inches, on the top of subgrade to ensure the slab's underneath level and slab concrete depth.
- **Provide rebar spacers.** It is required to place sufficient numbers of spacers under rebar to provide the required concrete clear cover for negative and positive moment reinforcement.
- **Design—increase reinforcement for positive moment.** The reinforcement area of positive moment in longitudinal direction must be increased by 49% in order to provide enough bending capacity for a slab.
- **Design—account for temperature and shrinkage reinforcement.** Temperature and shrinkage reinforcement required by ACI-318 must be provided for the bus pad to avoid surface cracks due to shrinkage and temperature changes. This should be at least 3#2 for one foot spacing, which can increase the required bending capacity for both transverse and longitudinal directions.
- **Add fibers to increase concrete strength.** As an alternative solution, steel or glass fibers can be also added to concrete mix to increase bending capacity and control crack development.
- **Inspection.** Inspection during construction and checking tolerances are necessary to ensure quality of work and they can guarantee durability and reduce repair. Transverse joints must be appropriately placed and constructed and filled with a flexible material to avoid cracks development.

8. Future Work

Despite the comprehensiveness of the present work, this work can be expanded in the future to study the following:

- 1- Study on construction joints and their interaction with slabs to appropriately design the joint depth, thickness and spacing. This requires an experimental investigation as only a few studies have been conducted on this topic.
- 2- Since most of the cases in this study were newly constructed bus pads, the effect of fatigue loads was not deeply studied. This can be done in the future to evaluate fatigue performance of bus pads experimentally, as they are subjected to repetitive loads with high frequency.
- 3- Full-scale testing of concrete bus pads and their soil can be conducted to provide a better understanding of the two-way slab's performance subjected to different loading scenarios as well as assess soil-slab interaction.

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APPENDIX A

Moment results of four selected Shell Elements

