

ASPHALT PAVEMENT IS THE CHOICE FOR HEAVY LOADS!

Asphalt pavement has successfully performed well to withstand heavy traffic loads for many years, the busway at the University of Minnesota (U of MN) is just one example. Constructed in 1992, this 3.3-mile stretch of asphalt pavement supports the repeated, continuous, channelized and heavy busway traffic that connects the Minneapolis and St. Paul campuses.

The U of MN connection project was first envisioned in 1978 and designed in 1988. A Federal grant was received to build the exclusive busway in right-of-way shared with the railroad. The bus trips between Minneapolis and St. Paul took 15 minutes when traveled on Como Avenue. The busway has reduced the travel time to 7½ minutes, half the previous time.



Asphalt pavement has successfully withstood repeated heavy loads on the University of Minnesota busway between Minneapolis and St. Paul for 14 years.

Traffic loading is high, especially during the school year when the buses leave every five minutes during the day and every 15 minutes in the evening. The summer and weekend bus schedule is also heavy with buses leaving every 15 minutes. In August, during the Minnesota State Fair, the busway is shared with city buses that transport fair-goers between the parking facilities on Huron Street and the Como Avenue entrance to the Fairgrounds.



Jill Thomas, MAPA, and Dr. Mihai Marasteanu, University of Minnesota, check for distresses on the busway.



A bike path runs parallel to the busway from Minneapolis to St. Paul.

The asphalt pavement has performed so well that only minimal surface treatment has been performed during the 14 years of service the roadway has provided. Pete, a U of MN bus driver for the past 18 years, feels the road is in great condition, with a smooth driving surface. Reflecting on the condition of the roadway he said, "In fact, I cannot remember there ever being a pothole on this busway." The 28-foot wide pavement structure was constructed by Bituminous Roadways, Inc. with 6-inches of asphalt pavement (pre-Superpave technology) over 12-inches of granular base.

Clearly the myths are not true, as many people in the highway business already know, asphalt pavement can definitely be built economically and efficiently to withstand heavy loads!

