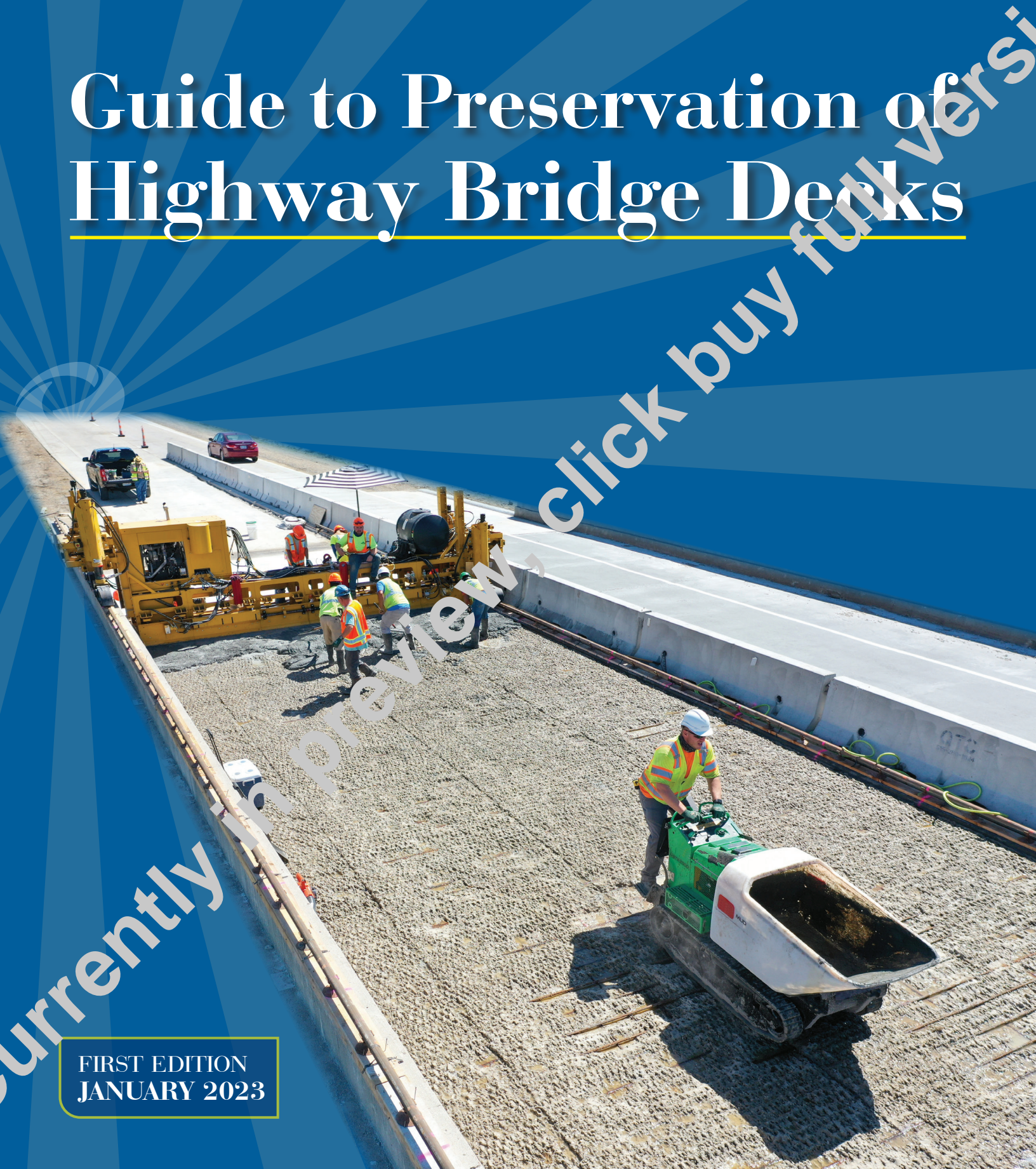


Guide to Preservation of Highway Bridge Decks



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FOREWORD

The AASHTO *Guide to Preservation of Highway Bridge Decks* lists preservation treatments such as deck overlays, surface sealers and deck repairs that can extend the life of bridge decks in service. The Guide considers various deck types and the deck condition that can influence the selection of preservation treatments. The Guide presents the factors in deck capacity and durability that can influence the identification of candidates for deck preservation.

The Guide is for decks in fair or good condition with significant remaining service life. In the United States, there are 1.9 billion square feet of bridge deck in good condition and 2.2 billion square feet of bridge deck in fair condition. There are significant benefits in preservation to extend the service life of the good decks, and to delay the end of service for the fair decks.

The Guide is a collection of existing information. To develop the Guide, practices of U.S. state DOTs in selection of preservation treatments were reviewed. Procedures for application of treatments were collected. Data on performance of treatments were analyzed. Performance of a preservation treatment is measured by the years added to service life of decks due to treatment. Using existing information, the Guide presents a representative practice for deck preservation, general procedures for application of treatments, and, in examples of evaluation of costs and benefits, average performance of treatments.

The guide is a product of research directed by technical committee T-9, Bridge Preservation, of the AASHTO Committee on Bridges and Structures. Committee T-9 worked through the National Cooperative Highway Research Program to produce this Guide and a companion publication, the AASHTO *Guide to Bridge Preservation Actions*.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
1.1. General.....	1-1
1.2. Bridge Preservation of Bridge Decks.....	1-1
1.3. Preservation Candidates.....	1-2
1.4. Organization of the Guide.....	1-2
1.5. Audience for the Guide.....	1-3
1.6. Related Documents.....	1-3
1.7. Bridge Decks Addressed in the Guide.....	1-3
1.8. Application to the Guide.....	1-3
SECTION 2: PRESERVATION TREATMENTS FOR BRIDGE DECKS.....	2-1
2.1. Introduction.....	2-1
2.2. Typical Reinforced Concrete Decks of Highway Bridges.....	2-1
2.3.1. Protection vs Repair.....	2-3
2.3.2. Surface Sealers.....	2-3
2.3.3. Thin Polymer Overlay.....	2-4
2.3.4. Polyester Concrete Overlay.....	2-4
2.3.5. HMA+Membrane Overlay.....	2-5
2.3.5.1. Membrane, Liquid.....	2-6
2.3.5.2. Membrane, Preformed.....	2-6
2.3.6. Portland Cement Concrete Overlays.....	2-6
2.3.7. Repair of Spalls.....	2-7
2.3.8. Repairs to Cracks.....	2-8
2.3.9. Comparison.....	2-9
2.4. Deck Treatments, Appendix A.....	2-10
2.5. Treatments in Combination.....	2-11
SECTION 3: EVALUATION OF BRIDGE DECKS.....	3-1
3.1. Introduction.....	3-1
3.2. Data on Condition of Bridge Deck.....	3-1
3.3. Defects and Treatments.....	3-4
3.4. Evaluation of Bridge Deck.....	3-4
3.4.1. Methods of Bridge Deck Inspection.....	3-4
3.5. Compromised Area of Bridge Decks.....	3-7
3.6. Reports.....	3-8
SECTION 4: SELECTING PRESERVATION TREATMENTS FOR BRIDGE DECKS.....	4-1
4.1. Introduction.....	4-1
4.2. Preserve or Replace?.....	4-1
4.3. Selection of Treatment.....	4-1
4.3.1. Non-Preservation Treatments.....	4-4
4.4. Extent of Treatment.....	4-4
4.5. Treatments and Condition of Bridge Decks.....	4-4
SECTION 5: COSTS AND BENEFITS OF DECK PRESERVATION.....	5-1
5.1. Introduction.....	5-1
5.2. Preservation-Cycle Cost Analysis.....	5-1
5.2.1. Untreated Bridge Deck.....	5-1

5.2.2. Treated Bridge Deck	5-2
5.3. Examples in Costs and Benefits of Deck Treatments.....	5-3
5.3.1. Limitation to Examples	5-3
5.3.2. Base Case—Cost of Deck Service without Treatment.....	5-3
5.3.3. Example 1: Use of Thin Polymer Overlay on a Bridge Deck in Good Condition	5-3
5.3.4. Example 2: Reapplication of Thin Polymer Overlay on a Bridge Deck in Good Condition.....	5-5
5.3.5. Example 3: Use of a PCC Overlay on a Deck in Fair Condition	5-6
5.3.6. Example 4: Use of a PCC Overlay on a Deck in Poor Condition	5-7
5.3.7. Summary of Examples 1 through 4.....	5-8
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	AA-1
REFERENCES.....	R-
APPENDIX A: PRESERVATION TREATMENTS FOR HIGHWAY BRIDGE DECKS	A-
A.1— <i>OvThPG</i> : Thin Polymer Overlay, General	A-2
A.2— <i>OvThEp</i> : Thin Polymer Overlay, Epoxy + Aggregate.....	A-9
A.3— <i>OvThMm</i> : Thin Polymer Overlay, Methyl Methacrylate + Aggregate	A-12
A.4— <i>OvThPe</i> : Thin Polymer Overlay, Polyester + Aggregate	A-14
A.5— <i>OvPpc</i> : Polyester Concrete Overlay	A-16
A.6— <i>OvHma+M</i> : Overlay HMA + Waterproofing Membrane.....	A-24
A.7— <i>OvPccG</i> : PCC Overlay, General	A-29
A.8— <i>OvPccLm</i> : PCC Overlay, Latex Modified.....	A-35
A.9— <i>OvPccD</i> : PCC Overlay, Dense	A-39
A.10— <i>OvPccSm</i> : PCC Overlay, Silica-Modified.....	A-42
A.11— <i>OvUhp</i> : PCC Overlay, Ultra-High Performance	A-45
A.12— <i>I&E</i> : Inspection and Evaluation	A-48
A.13— <i>RpCrEp</i> : Crack Repair, Epoxy	A-50
A.14— <i>RpSpOvPl</i> : Repair Spall, Thin Polymer Overlay.....	A-53
A.15— <i>RpSpG</i> : Deck, General	A-55
A.16— <i>RpSpT1</i> : Deck Repair, Spall Type 1 Shallow.....	A-59
A.17— <i>RpSpT2</i> : Deck Repair, Spall Type 2 below Top Mat of Rebars	A-61
A.18— <i>RpSpT3</i> : Deck Repair Spall, Type 3 Full Depth.....	A-64
A.19— <i>SeG</i> : Seal Surface, General.....	A-67
A.20— <i>SeMm</i> : Seal Surface, Methyl Methacrylate	A-70
A.21— <i>SeEp</i> : Seal Surface, Epoxy Sealer	A-73
A.22— <i>SeSi</i> : Seal Surface, Silane Sealer, Siloxane Sealer	A-76
APPENDIX B: DEFECTS IN HIGHWAY BRIDGE DECKS.....	B-1
MBEI Defect 1080	B-2
MBEI Defect 1090	B-3
MBEI Defect 1100	B-4
MBEI Defect 1130	B-5
MBEI Defect 3600	B-6
MBEI Defect 1190	B-7
MBEI Defect 1100	B-8
MBEI Defect 1110	B-9
MBEI Defect 3210	B-10
MBEI Defect 3220	B-11

MBEI Defect 3230	B-12
MBEI Defect 1000	B-13
MBEI Defect 1010	B-14
MBEI Defect 1020	B-15
MBEI Defect 1900	B-16
MBEI Defect 1020	B-17
MBEI Defect 1150	B-18
MBEI Defect 1140	B-19
MBEI Defect 1160	B-20
MBEI Defect 1170	B-21
MBEI Defect 1180	B-22
APPENDIX C: SELECTION OF PRESERVATION TREATMENTS FOR BRIDGE DECKS	C-1
C.1—Costs and Service Lives of Preservation Treatments.....	C-1
C.2—Bare Reinforced Concrete Deck	C-4
C.3—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Surface Sealer	C-10
C.4—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Thin Polymer Overlay.....	C-15
C.5—Reinforced Concrete Deck with HMA + Waterproofing Membrane	C-18
C.6—Reinforced Concrete Deck with <i>Ppc</i> , <i>Pcc</i> , <i>PccD</i> , <i>PccLm</i> , or <i>PccSm</i> Overlay.....	C-21
C.7—Steel Grid Deck	C-24
C.8—Timber Deck.....	C-27

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.3-1—List of Preservation Treatments for Bridge Decks.....	2-2
Table 2.3.9-1—Comparison of Preservation Treatments for Bridge Decks.....	2-10
Table 2.5-1—Preservation and Treatments.....	2-11
Table C3.2-1— Performance of Bridge Decks	3-1
Table C3.2-2—NBI Condition Ratings.....	3-2
Table C3.2-3—MBEI Deck Elements.....	3-3
Table C3.2-4—MBEI Condition States	3-3
Table C3.2-5—MBEI Defects for Deck elements.....	3-4
Table C3.4.1-1—Methods for Inspection of Bridge Decks.....	3-5
Table 3.4.1-1—Deck Condition, Deck Inspection	3-7
Table C4.3-1—Deck Performance and Preservation Treatments.....	4-2
Table C4.3-2—Deck NBI Condition Rating and Preservation Treatments.....	4-3
Table C4.3-3—Deck Compromised Area And Deck Treatments	4-3
Table C4.3-4—Element-Level Condition and Deck Treatments	4-4
Table 4.5-1—Appendix C Guidance on Preservation Treatments for Bridge Decks.....	4-5
Table 5.3.1-1—Examples in Costs and Benefits of Deck Treatments	5-3
Table 5.3.7-1—Summary of Examples in PCCA	5-9
Table A-1—Standard Headings Used in This Appendix	A-1
Table A.1.5-1—Preferred Graduation of Aggregate.....	A-3
Table A.1.6-1—Placement in Multiple Layers	A-3
Table A.2.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvThEp</i>	A-9
Table A.2.12-1—Typical Curing Times for <i>OvThEp</i>	A-10
Table A.3.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvThMm</i>	A-12
Table A.3.6-1—Material Rates for <i>OvThMm</i>	A-13
Table A.4.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvThPe</i>	A-14
Table A.5.5-1—Requirements for Methyl Methacrylate Primer.....	A-17
Table A.5.5-2—Requirements for Polyester Resin.....	A-17
Table A.5.5-3—Requirements for Cured Polyester Concrete.....	A-18
Table A.5.5-4—Gradation for Aggregate for Polyester Concrete.....	A-18
Table A.5.6-1—Material Rates for <i>OvPpc</i>	A-19
Table A.5.13-1—Acceptance Tests for <i>OvPpc</i>	A-22
Table A.6.5-1—Typical Properties of Preformed Membranes	A-25
Table A.7.5-1—Coarse Aggregate Sizes for PCC Mix.....	A-30
Table A.8.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvPccLm</i>	A-35
Table A.8.5-1—Requirements for Latex Emulsion Admixture	A-36
Table A.8.5-2—Typical <i>OcPccLm</i> Mix	A-36
Table A.9.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvPccD</i>	A-39
Table A.9.5.1—Typical <i>OvPccD</i> Mix.....	A-40
Table A.10.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvPccSm</i>	A-42
Table A.10.5-1— <i>OvPccSm</i> Mix	A-43
Table A.11.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>OvUhpc</i>	A-45
Table A.11.5-1— <i>OvUhpc</i> Mix Requirements.....	A-46
Table A.13.5-1—Typical Sand Grading for Crack Repair.....	A-51
Table A.14.6-1—Material Rates for <i>OvSp</i>	A-53
Table A.15.5-1—R3 Concrete Strengths	A-55
Table A.16.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>RpSpTI</i>	A-59

Table A.17.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>RpSpT2</i>	A-61
Table A.17.10-1—Rebar Exposure <i>E</i>	A-62
Table A.18.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>RpSpT3</i>	A-64
Table A.19.3-1—Permeability	A-67
Table A.20.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>SeMm</i>	A-70
Table A.20.5-1—Typical Methyl Methacrylate Healer/Sealer Properties	A-71
Table A.20.5.2—Typical Sand Grading.....	A-71
Table A.20.6-1—Methyl Methacrylate and Sand Material Rates	A-71
Table A.21.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>SeEp</i>	A-73
Table A.21.6-1—Material Rates for <i>SeEp</i>	A-74
Table A.22.2-1—Articles Providing Information for <i>SeSi</i>	A-76
Table A.22.5-1—Typical Material Properties for Silanes, Siloxanes, and Other Silicon-Based Surface Sealers... A-77	
Table A.22.6-1—Material Rates for <i>SeSi</i>	A-77
Table B-1—Highway Bridge Deck Treatment Groupings.....	B-1
Table C.1-1—Treatments, Normalized Cost, Extension to Service Life	C-2
Table C.1-2—Deck General Condition and Deck Defects	C-2
Table C.1-3—Treatments and Normalized Benefit	C-3

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.5-1—Example of Appendix C’s Standard Format for Preservation Treatment Guidance.....	4-6
Figure B-1—Delamination, Spall, Patch: MBEI Defect 1080	B-2
Figure B-2—Exposed Rebar: MBEI Defect 1090	B-3
Figure B-3—Efflorescence/Rust Staining: MBEI Defect 1120	B-4
Figure B-4—Cracking (RC and Other): MBEI Defect 1130	B-5
Figure B-5—Concrete Reinforcing Steel Protective System—Effectiveness: MBEI Defect 3600	B-6
Figure B-6—Abrasion/Wear (PSC/RC): MBEI Defect 1190	B-7
Figure B-7—Exposed Prestressing: MBEI Defect 1100.....	B-8
Figure B-8—Cracking (PSC): MBEI Defect 1110	B-9
Figure B-9—Wearing Surface, Delamination, Pothole, Patch: MBEI Defect 3210	B-10
Figure B-10—Wearing Surface, Crack: MBEI Defect 3220	B-11
Figure B-11—Wearing Surface, Effectiveness: MBEI Defect 3230	B-12
Figure B-12—Corrosion—Steel Grid Deck: MBEI Defect 1000	B-13
Figure B-13—Fatigue Crack—Steel Grid Deck: MBEI Defect 1010.....	B-14
Figure B-14—Connection—Steel Grid Deck: MBEI Defect 1020.....	B-15
Figure B-15—Distortion—Steel Grid Deck: MBEI Defect 1900.....	B-16
Figure B-16—Connection—Timber Deck: MBEI Defect 1020	B-17
Figure B-17—Check, Shake—Timber Deck: MBEI Defect 1150.....	B-18
Figure B-18—Decay, Section Loss—Timber Deck: MBEI Defect 1140	B-19
Figure B-19—Crack—Timber Deck: MBEI Defect 1160	B-20
Figure B-20—Split/Delamination—Timber Deck: MBEI Defect 1170	B-21
Figure B-21—Abrasion/Wear—Timber Deck: MBEI Defect 1180	B-22
Figure C.2-1—Bare Reinforced Concrete Deck—Good Condition.....	C-4
Figure C.2-2—Bare Reinforced Concrete Deck—Fair Condition	C-6
Figure C.2-3—Bare Reinforced Concrete Deck—Poor Condition	C-8
Figure C.3-1—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Surface Sealer—Good Condition	C-10
Figure C.3-2—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Surface Sealer—Fair Condition.....	C-11

Figure C.3-3—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Surface Sealer—Poor Condition.....	C-13
Figure C.4-1—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Thin Polymer Overlay—Good Condition.....	C-15
Figure C.4-2—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Thin Polymer Overlay—Fair Condition	C-16
Figure C.4-3—Reinforced Concrete Deck with Thin Polymer Overlay—Poor Condition.....	C-17
Figure C.5-1—Reinforced Concrete Deck with HMA + Waterproofing Membrane—Good Condition	C-18
Figure C.5-2—Reinforced Concrete Deck with HMA + Waterproofing Membrane—Fair Condition.....	C-19
Figure C.5-3—Reinforced Concrete Deck with HMA + Waterproofing Membrane—Poor Condition.....	C-20
Figure C.6-1—Reinforced Concrete Deck with <i>Ppc, Pcc, PccD, PccLm, or PccSm</i> Overlay—Good Condition ..	C-21
Figure C.6-2—Reinforced Concrete Deck with <i>Ppc, Pcc, PccD, PccLm, or PccSm</i> Overlay—Fair Condition....	C-22
Figure C.6-3—Reinforced Concrete Deck with <i>Ppc, Pcc, PccD, PccLm, or PccSm</i> Overlay—Poor Condition....	C-23
Figure C.7-1—Steel Grid Deck—Good Condition	C-24
Figure C.7-2—Steel Grid Deck—Fair Condition	C-25
Figure C.7-3—Steel Grid Deck—Poor Condition	C-26
Figure C.8-1—Timber Deck—Good Condition.....	C-27
Figure C.8-2—Timber Deck—Fair Condition	C-28
Figure C.8-3—Timber Deck—Poor Condition	C-29

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. GENERAL

This is a Guide to preservation of highway bridge decks.

Preservation is a program of treatments applied to bridge decks in service to keep bridge decks in good or fair condition.

Treatments are the materials and actions used to protect or repair bridge decks. Many treatments are intended to protect bridge decks from ingress of chloride ion and from freeze–thaw damage.

This Guide lists treatments for bridge decks, provides procedures for treatments, relates treatments to conditions of bridge decks, reviews methods of evaluation of bridge decks, and presents examples in evaluation of costs and benefits of treatments. Most of the content of the Guide is directed at reinforced concrete bridge decks.

Preservation of bridge decks is one task in the overall preservation of highway bridges. Preservation of highway bridges is addressed in the *Guide to Bridge Preservation Actions* (AASHTO, 2021b).

1.2. PRESERVATION OF BRIDGE DECKS

Preservation of bridge decks is a program of treatments intended to

- Extend service life of bridge decks,
- Keep bridge decks in good or fair condition, and
- Reduce life-cycle costs.

Treatments include surface sealers, overlays, and waterproofing membranes with wearing course. The application of treatments often includes repairs to cracks, spalls, and delaminations.

C1.1.

This Section introduces the content and organization of the Guide.

Treatments are means of preserving bridge decks in service.

C1.2.

Preservation is one part of the program for highway bridges of a transportation agency. The bridge program includes a capital program for bridge rehabilitation and replacement, plus a preservation program for bridge protection and repair. Similar categories are applied to bridge decks. Protection and repair of decks are within preservation programs. Deck replacements are beyond preservation programs.

Programs for bridge preservation establish boundaries on the population of bridge decks that are candidates for preservation, and on the actions that are preservation treatments.

Preservation treatments include protection and repair of existing bridge decks. Projects to improve, replace, or construct bridge decks are beyond the intended scope of a deck preservation program.

Preservation treatments delay or slow deterioration in bridge decks.

Funds available to transportation agencies are limited, and there is competition among needs in preservation, restoration, replacement, capacity expansion, and new construction. Preservation programs are manageable when a defined population of structures is addressed. Preservation programs exist within an agency when decisions in allocation of funds are taken at the program level rather than the project level.