

A GUIDE FROM GRAND VALLEY PARKING LOT SERVICES

The Mesa County

Parking Lot Owner's Playbook

What every property owner in the Grand Valley should know before they fix, seal, or repave their lot.

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INTRO

Why I Wrote This

Hi. I'm Jared.

I own Grand Valley Parking Lot Services. I live here in Grand Junction with my family. I'm a veteran. I run the crew myself.

I see the same thing on almost every lot I walk. Owners pay way more than they should. Some get sold work they don't need. Others wait too long and watch their lot fall apart. Most just don't know what to ask.

So I wrote this. It's the same stuff I tell people when I walk their lot in person.

What you'll learn:

- 1 Why Mesa County is brutal on parking lots
- 2 What it really costs to do nothing
- 3 The ADA lawsuit risk most owners don't know about
- 4 What real maintenance looks like
- 5 How to check your own lot today
- 6 How to pick a contractor without getting screwed

No sales pitch. Just the truth from someone who does this work every day.

If you have a question after you read this, call or text me at **(970) 205-9275**. I answer my own phone — and if I can't pick up, I call back within the hour.

— Jared

Don't want to call yet? Do this today:

1. Walk your lot with the checklist on Page 8 (10 minutes).
2. Snap photos of any ADA spaces, faded signs, and big cracks.
3. If anything you find worries you, then call or text. Free walk-through, no pitch.

CLIMATE

Your Lot Is Under Attack

What's happening to your asphalt right now.

Your lot looks fine. But four things are wearing it down right now. Every day.

Mesa County is one of the toughest places in the country for asphalt. Grand Junction sits at **4,500 feet** — thinner air, more UV baking your surface. Winter brings **80 to 120 freeze-thaw cycles** that pull cracks open. Without real care, a lot that should last 25 to 30 years often starts breaking down in just **8 to 12 years**.

1 The Sun

Asphalt is rock glued together with oil. The sun bakes that oil out. When it's gone, the surface turns gray and cracks. At 4,500 feet, the thinner air lets about 15% more UV reach the ground than at sea level. Your lot takes a beating from the sun every single day.

2 Water

Water is the worst thing for asphalt. It seeps into cracks. Once it's under the surface, it softens the base. A soft base means the top sinks and breaks.

3 Freeze-Thaw

Water gets in a crack during the day. Freezes at night. Water grows when it freezes. That pushes the crack open more. After five winters, a hairline crack is a pothole.

4 Heavy Use

Trucks, cars, trash bins, and turning tires wear down the surface. Drive lanes and entrances get hit the hardest.

Repaving costs \$3.50 to \$6.50 per square foot. That math gets ugly fast — at any lot size. Real care doubles your lot's life.

The Real Cost of Doing Nothing

Let's talk honest math.

Most "save money" pitches about parking lot care are wrong. Here's the truth.

The repave is coming either way. You can't avoid it forever. Asphalt has a life span. The only thing you control is when. Without care, you repave around year 10 to 12 in this climate. With care, year 25 to 30 or beyond. Care doesn't skip the bill — it pushes it back 15+ years.

Your Lot, Over 25 Years

	Doing Nothing	Real Maintenance
How long the lot looks great	5 to 8 years	The whole time
When you repave	Around year 10–12	Year 25 or later
Cost to repave (per sq ft)	\$3.50 – \$6.50	Same — 15+ years later
Yearly maintenance (per sq ft)	\$0	\$0.35 – \$0.50

*Multiply by your lot's square footage. Example: a 25,000 sq ft lot is \$87K to \$162K to repave, or \$8.75K to \$12.5K a year to keep up. **Heads up:** over 25 years, keeping up your lot costs more total than just repaving every 10 to 12 years. You're paying for the five things below.*

So why keep up?

You spend more on care. You don't save on the repave. **So what do you get?**

- 1 Your lot looks sharp every single year — not just the first five.**
- 2 You stay safe from ADA lawsuits (next page).**
- 3 Tenants stick around. Replacing a lost retail tenant costs tens of thousands in vacancy and tenant fit-out.**
- 4 Your property sells for more. Our records prove your lot was cared for, so buyers can't knock down your price.**
- 5 A bill once a year is doable. A surprise six-figure repave check breaks your budget.**

The ADA Lawsuit Risk

Most owners don't know this exists.

2,500+

LAWSUITS FILED BY ONE FIRM IN ONE YEAR

\$5K-\$75K

COST OF A SINGLE ADA LAWSUIT

Most are "drive-by" lawsuits. A lawyer or paid plaintiff drives through, takes photos, and files a claim. They never set foot in your business. You just get served.

Why lots fail an ADA check:

- Wrong number of handicap spaces
- Not closest to the entrance
- Faded or missing paint
- Missing or wrong signs
- Access aisle under 60 inches wide
- No van-accessible space (1 in 6 rule)
- Slope too steep at the space
- Sidewalk path blocked or broken

Required accessible spaces:

Total Spots	Accessible
1 – 25	1 (must be van-accessible)
26 – 50	2
51 – 75	3
76 – 100	4
101 – 150	5
151 – 200	6
201 – 300	7
301 – 400	8
401 – 500	9
501 – 1,000	2% of total

The van rule that catches most owners. 1 of every 6 accessible spaces (or any fraction of 6) must be van-accessible — that means a wider 8-foot access aisle and a "VAN ACCESSIBLE" sign. If you only have 1 accessible space, it MUST be the van one.

The hard truth. You can do everything else right and still get hit with a \$50,000 ADA lawsuit because your signs are faded or your access aisle is 58 inches instead of 60. We check ADA on every lot we walk. **Free.**

This is general information about ADA rules, not legal advice. For your specific lot, talk to an attorney or get a professional ADA review.

What Real Maintenance Looks Like

The five things every commercial lot needs — plus the one nobody else does.

1. Crack Sealing

Hot rubber fills every crack. Done before sealing. Stops water from getting under the surface.

Do this: Every year. Hot-pour lasts 3 to 10 years per fill.

Watch out: Some companies use cold-pour. It fails in 1 to 2 years. Always ask.

2. Seal Coating (Double Coat)

A black coat over the whole lot. Blocks the sun. Blocks water. Restores the look.

Do this: Every 2 years. Two coats, not one.

Watch out: Single-coat jobs cost less because they ARE less. Two coats is the commercial standard.

3. Line Striping

Bright, sharp lines every year. Handicap symbols. Arrows. Fire lanes.

Do this: Every year for commercial lots. Always after seal coating.

Watch out: We use commercial-grade water-based traffic paint — built for commercial lots and easy to refresh.

4. Sweeping

Removes sand, gravel, salt, and trash. Winter sand grinds your seal coat like sandpaper.

Do this: Recommended four times a year. The spring sweep is the most important one.

Watch out: Good practice, not required. Skipping it shortens seal coat life and clogs your drains.

5. Power Washing

Cleans oil, gum, and ground-in dirt. Required before any seal coat so the coat sticks.

Do this: Once or twice a year. Always before seal coating.

Watch out: A clean surface helps seal coat bond well and last longer.

The one thing no other Mesa County contractor does:

Real documentation. A written report with photos, a condition score, an ADA check, and a 5-year plan. Most owners get a verbal quote and a handshake. We give you records you can hand to a buyer, a lender, or your boss. It's how you protect your property's value. It's the proof that work was actually done. And it's built into every contract we sign — no extra charge.

PLANNING

Your Lot's 12-Month Calendar

What your lot needs, and when.

This is what good care looks like over a year in Mesa County. Use it even if you don't hire anyone.

Month	What Your Lot Needs
April	Spring sweep. Get winter sand and salt off. Clear drains. Check for new cracks.
May – June	Best window for crack sealing and seal coating. Need 50°F and rising, no rain.
July	Mid-summer sweep. Check striping. ADA paint usually needs a refresh.
August	Mid-season check. Look at high-traffic spots. Note new damage.
September	Second-best window for seal coating before the cold. October is risky.
October	Fall sweep. Pull leaves and trash out of drains before they freeze.
November	Full lot inspection. Photos. Score the condition. Note cracks for spring.
Dec – Feb	Off-season. Plan next year. Sign contracts. Book your spot.
March	Walk the lot. Check for new cracks from winter. Plan the spring sweep.

Crack Season = November through April. Your lot gets pulled apart and pushed back together 80 to 120 times. A March or April inspection catches the damage before summer heat makes it worse.

Want me to walk your lot with you? Free. No pitch. Call or text (970) 205-9275.

YOUR LOT

Check Your Lot Today

A 10-minute self-assessment.

Walk your lot. Pick the option that fits best for each one. Add the points.

Surface Color

- Jet black (5)
- Dark gray (3)
- Light gray or brown (1)
- Faded white (0)

Potholes

- None (5)
- 1–3 small (3)
- Several or big (1)
- Many (0)

Standing Water

- None (5)
- 1–2 spots (3)
- Several spots (1)
- Pools across the lot (0)

Edges & Drains

- Clean, no weeds (5)
- Some weeds/debris (3)
- Drains slow to clear (1)
- Blocked drains (0)

Cracks

- None (5)
- Hairline only (3)
- Wider than your finger (1)
- Alligator pattern (looks like alligator skin) (0)

Stripes

- Bright and sharp (5)
- Faded but visible (3)
- Hard to see (1)
- Mostly gone (0)

ADA Spaces

- Bright, signed, clear aisle (5)
- Some fading (3)
- Missing signs or marks (1)
- None on the lot (0)

YOUR TOTAL: _____ / 35

What your score means — and what to do next:

Your Total	What It Means	Do This
30 – 35	Great shape. Light keep-up.	Call for a yearly check-up.
20 – 29	Decent shape. Plan a seal coat and stripe.	Call for a free walk-through.
10 – 19	Bad shape. Real work needed soon.	Call for a walk-through now.
Under 10	Critical. Repairs or repave in 3 to 5 years.	Call today. Don't wait.

DECISIONS

Seal, Overlay, or Repave?

Three options. Here's how to tell which fits.

Not every lot needs the same fix. There are three real paths, ordered by how much work the lot needs.

MAINTAIN	RESURFACE	REPLACE
<p>Seal Coat & Crack Seal</p> <p>When this fits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Surface is mostly intact• Cracks are hairline to half-inch wide• Few small potholes that can be patched• Less than 25% alligator cracking• Base is solid (no sinking spots) <p>Cost: \$0.35 – \$0.50 / sq ft / year</p> <p>Buys you: Doubles your lot's life. Done on a 2-year cycle.</p>	<p>Mill & Overlay</p> <p>When this fits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Surface is breaking up but base is solid• Cracks too wide or many to seal• 25% to 50% alligator cracking• Surface is rough but structure is OK• Lot looks bad but still works <p>Cost: \$2.00 – \$4.00 / sq ft (once)</p> <p>Buys you: 10 to 15 years before you need it again — if you keep up with seal coat.</p>	<p>Full Repave</p> <p>When this fits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Base failure across large areas• Pavement sinks or pushes water out• Potholes go all the way to the base• More than 50% breaking apart• Tree roots have pushed up the asphalt <p>Cost: \$3.50 – \$6.50 / sq ft (once)</p> <p>Buys you: 25 to 30 years — but only if you maintain it from day one.</p>

What "Mill & Overlay" means: we grind off the top layer of asphalt and lay fresh asphalt over the old base. It costs less than a full repave but only works if the base under your lot is still strong.

The honest answer. Most lots in Mesa County don't need a repave. They need crack sealing, a double seal coat, fresh stripes, and a yearly check. If a contractor walks your lot and says "you need a full repave" without explaining why, get a second look. Some companies push repaves because the bigger ticket means more money. We'll tell you the truth — and if your lot really does need a mill-and-overlay or full repave, we run that work through our trusted local paving partner and manage the whole job for you. One vendor. One point of contact. One document trail.

How to Pick a Contractor

Five questions that tell you everything.

1 "Do you use hot-pour or cold-pour crack sealant?"

✓ **Right:** Hot-pour. Lasts 3–10 years. Flexes with the pavement.

✗ **Wrong:** Cold-pour. Lasts 1–2 years. Cracks again the first winter.

2 "Do you single-coat or double-coat?"

✓ **Right:** Double-coat. Two layers. Standard for commercial lots.

✗ **Wrong:** Single-coat. Half the protection. Will be gone in a year.

3 "Will you check my ADA compliance?"

✓ **Right:** Yes, every time. They walk the lot and show you what's wrong.

✗ **Wrong:** "ADA is on you." Then they aren't really protecting you.

4 "What's your guarantee?"

✓ **Right:** At least 12 months in writing. Specific about what's covered.

✗ **Wrong:** "We stand behind our work." That's a slogan, not a guarantee.

5 "Will I get photos and a written report?"

✓ **Right:** Yes — same-day photos. Written report when done.

✗ **Wrong:** "We don't usually do that." Then how will you know what you paid for?

Red Flags

- **Door-to-door cold call with "leftover sealer."** Scam. Sealer is often watered down.
- **No insurance.** Ask for a certificate with at least \$1 million general liability.
- **No written estimate.** Verbal quotes aren't real. Get it in writing.
- **Cash-only discount.** They're hiding from taxes. They'll hide from problems too.
- **Vague guarantee.** "We do good work" is not a guarantee. Get terms in writing.

PROOF

Lots We've Cared For

A look at our recent work across the Grand Valley.



New-build retail lot. Custom layout from scratch — striping, arrows, and two van-accessible ADA bays.



Industrial drive lot. Full restripe, fresh ADA, and curved-flow drive lanes for big trucks.



Small commercial lot. Fresh seal coat, bright yellow striping, two ADA spaces marked to code.



EV charging plaza. Fresh asphalt, custom EV stencils, ADA-accessible charging bays.



Multi-tenant retail lot. Custom layout with curved striping, two ADA bays, and a bus lane.



Strip mall. Full restripe with crisp yellow lines and fresh ADA spaces.

Your lot may not need what you think it needs. Get a second look before you spend big money. Free. No pitch. Call (970) 205-9275.

NEXT STEP

When You're Ready

Free lot check. No pitch.

You don't need a guide to know if your lot is in bad shape. You can see it. But if you want a real second opinion before you spend money, I'll come walk your lot with you. **Free. No pitch.**

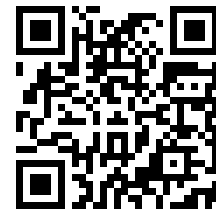
You'll walk away with:

- 1 **A written condition score**
- 2 **Photos of every problem area**
- 3 **A list of what needs to happen first, second, and third**
- 4 **An ADA check**
- 5 **A ballpark price range for the work**
- 6 **A custom action plan for your lot, in writing**

If you want to hire us, great. If you don't, you still have a real plan from someone who looked at your lot.

Jared Hardin

(970) 205-9275 · Call or text any time
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About Grand Valley Parking Lot Services

We're the only company in western Colorado that builds a written record into every job — photos, condition scores, and a 5-year plan. That's the moat.

- Veteran-owned · Local to Grand Junction
- 12-month work guarantee in writing
- 18+ five-star Google reviews
- Free lot checks — any property type

Sources: ADA 2010 Standards for Accessible Design (ada.gov); Colorado parking lot lifespan data from regional paving industry reports; Grand Junction climate data from the National Weather Service. This document is general information, not legal or engineering advice. For decisions about your specific lot, consult a qualified professional.