



Minnesota



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration

# Memorandum



Section of Gooseberry Falls

Subject: **INFORMATION:** MUTCD – Official Ruling 3(09)-24(I) – Application of Colored Pavement

Date: **AUG 15 2013**

From:   
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In Reply Refer To:  
HOTO-1

To: Federal Lands Highway Division Engineers  
Division Administrators

**Purpose:** Through this memorandum, the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) Office of Transportation Operations (HOTO) is issuing an Official Interpretation of Chapter 3G of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways* (MUTCD) on the approved uses of colored pavement. For recordkeeping purposes, this Official Ruling has been assigned the following number and title: “3(09)-24(I) – Application of Colored Pavement.”

**Background:** The FHWA is concerned that considerable ambiguity continues regarding how colored pavement can be used, especially between the white transverse lines of a legally marked crosswalk.

Colored pavements consist of differently colored road paving materials, such as colored asphalt or concrete, or paint or other marking materials applied to the surface of a road or island to simulate a colored pavement. Colored pavement is a traffic control device when it attempts to communicate with any roadway user or when it incorporates retroreflective properties. Colored pavement can also be a purely aesthetic treatment. When used in this manner, colored pavement is not a traffic control device provided that it does not attempt to communicate with the motorist or incorporate elements of retroreflectorization.

**Colored Pavement in Crosswalks:** In the late 1990s, the marketplace introduced and promoted aesthetic treatments for urban streetscape environments that included the opportunity to install a range of colors and a multitude of patterns. The most popular opportunity to implement these treatments was between the legally marked transverse lines of crosswalks. This was typically done as part of larger efforts by cities to enhance the aesthetics of an area that could include decorative luminaires, street furniture, sidewalk art, etc. These crosswalk treatments were publicized and marketed as a method to increase conspicuity of the crosswalk that would translate into increased safety and a reduction of pedestrian deaths. In December 2001, the FHWA issued its first Official Ruling<sup>1</sup>



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# crosswalks

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# Shoulder lanes (Virginia)

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# Transit areas experimental

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# Bike lanes interim approval

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