



DATE: October 1, 2021
INTERPRETATION NO.: CI2021-0001
TITLE: Accessible Routes of Travel and Parking Materials
RELATED DEPT. & DIVISION: Development Services Department
TOPIC: Accessibility, Parking
DECISION MAKER: Beth M. Culver, AIA, CBO, Building Official

SUMMARY: Alternative materials, such as granite gravel or gravel, are not acceptable as paving materials for accessible routes of travel and parking for commercial projects.

CODE SECTIONS: 2015 International Building Code

- [Chapter 11, Accessibility](#)

CODE INTERPRETATION:

An accessible route is defined as a continuous, unobstructed path connecting all accessible elements and spaces of a building or facility. Exterior accessible routes include parking space aisles, curb ramps, crosswalks at vehicular ways, walkways, ramps, and elevator lifts.

Under the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS), Chapter 4.5.1, soft or loose materials, such as sand, gravel, bark, mulch, or wood chips, are not suitable for ground surfaces along an accessible path. Typically, granite gravel is a crushed material that is angular in form. The material may be compacted sufficiently at initial placement; however, the material may erode or become saturated from rain or irrigation systems and not provide a stable nor firm surface as required by the TAS.

In certain situations, granite gravel may be used as part of an accessible path. This would be limited to walking trails or areas with recreational type developments, such as parks. Where allowed, the running slope shall be no more than 5 percent (1:20) and the cross slope shall be no more than 2 percent. Drainage must also be addressed to keep water from ponding or allowing excessive velocities across the granite gravel surface.

In all other situations, the accessible route and parking spaces should be constructed with a hard, permanent surface, such as concrete or asphalt paving material. Use of pavers or other materials is discouraged as these materials may shift over time and create an irregular or unstable surface.



Beth M. Culver, AIA, CBO, Building Official

This interpretation was previously approved as CI2011-0002 by Leon Barba, Building Official.