The increasing numbers of older drivers will pose many challenges to transportation engineers. The 65 and older age group, which numbered 33.5 million in 1995, will grow to more than 36 million by 2005, and will exceed 50 million by 2020. (Older Driver Highway Design Handbook, Recommendations and Guidelines, U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration)

The primary factor contributing to the diminished capabilities of older drivers is decreased vision. This necessitates transportation engineers to provide solutions for better visibility, especially at night and in inclement weather.

“More accidents occur at night per capita than during daylight hours. Why? The visibility of objects depends largely on the illumination provided by vehicle headlights. If objects are dark (such as the very road surface you are driving on) and absorb the headlight illumination, then no light bounces back to warn you.” (ASTM Standardization News, February 2000)
Because of its reflectivity and visibility, the use of white concrete in median barriers and bridge parapets is increasing, making highway driving much safer for travelers, especially in inclement weather and at night.
BRIDGE PARAPETS USING WHITE CONCRETE

Fifth Street Bridge, Dayton, OH

Sheridan Street Bridge, Evanston, IL

I-35
Austin,
Texas

Mon Fayette Highway,
Pennsylvania
Gray concrete barrier painted white —
In need of re-painting.

White concrete barrier—

White concrete barriers for construction work zones.

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