



California Traffic Control Devices Committee Agenda Item Report



Meeting Date: April 3, 2025 Item Number: 24-12	From: Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans HQ Safety Programs
Sponsored By: Amjad Obeid, Caltrans	Presented By: Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans HQ Safety Programs
Description: Request for review and recommendation to finalize CA MUTCD 2026 Part 7 titled "Traffic Control for School Areas" proposed document that has been revised in response to CTCDC comments provided to Caltrans in previous meeting and is being prepared to adopt Federal Highway Administration's National MUTCD 2023 (11 th Edition) before the January 18, 2026, deadline.	

Recommendation:

Motion by committee to approve CA MUTCD 2026 Part 7 titled "Traffic Control for School Areas" draft document and include it in CA MUTCD 2026 version that is being prepared to adopt Federal Highway Administration's National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition) before the January 18, 2026, deadline.

Agency Making Request/Sponsor:

Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans / Amjad Obeid, Caltrans

Background:

For detailed background on this item, including the previously proposed revisions upon which the CTCDC provided comments shared below were based, as well as the meeting minutes of the meeting discussions, please refer to agenda item 24-12 document and its attachments, that were included in the November 7, 2024, meeting and are available at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/ctcdc/meetings>.

This item was discussed previously in the November 7, 2024, meeting. During the meeting, several CTCDC members and FHWA CA Division representative shared their comments and concerns on the proposed revisions. The meeting discussions resulted in the CTCDC providing multiple comments to Caltrans and requesting Caltrans to review and address these comments, as appropriate. Caltrans was asked to revise these draft documents based on review of the CTCDC comments and provide them to CTCDC for review and discussion in a future meeting.

Summary of the CTCDC comments provided on November 7, 2024, meeting and Caltrans review, response and resolution to these comments, is as follows:

1. **CTCDC Comment – Part 7 (General):** Like the comment provided for Part 5 in previous meeting, incorporate National MUTCD 2023 contents as much as possible,

limiting California edits only when necessary to comply with state law or if needed due to unique California specific practices.

Caltrans agrees with comment in the interest of national uniformity and for ease in referencing and use of the manual. The CA MUTCD 2026 proposed documents prepared for Part 7, and included as attachments to this item, reflect limited edits of the National MUTCD 2023 contents. For agenda item 24-11, Caltrans had revised Part 5 accordingly, in response to similar comment provided for Part 5 in the previous meeting. Refer to the separate agenda item 24-11, which addresses CA MUTCD 2026 Part 5 documents, and is included in this meeting's agenda list.

2. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7A, Figure 7A-1:** This figure shows examples of marked crosswalks located on one, two and three legs of three-leg and four-leg intersections. It does not include the example of marked crosswalks being located at all four legs of a four-leg intersection. Consider adding a new figure showing examples of all four legs of a four-leg intersection with marked crosswalks.

Caltrans agrees with comment and will develop a new figure that will be added to Chapter 7A showing examples of all four legs of a four-leg intersection with marked crosswalks. Figures for inclusion in CA MUTCD 2026 are being developed under a consultant contract, and not available currently. See note on page 4 of 4 of Attachment B.

3. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7A, Section 7A.02, para #03:** Text “*Bicycle use as a mode of transportation, as applicable, should also be considered if students biking to and from school are not allowed to use the sidewalks along the pedestrian route.*” This text implies that bicyclists, in general, use the sidewalk and not the roadway, which isn't true. Since these school route plans are for all grades of schools, generally, high school students do not ride on the sidewalk, they use the roadway. Suggest revising text to include consideration of bicycle use in school route plans.

Caltrans agrees with comment and has revised this text to address students bicycling to and from school, as shown in para #03 of this section in Attachment A.

4. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7A, Section 7A.02, para #05a:** In text “...for the purpose of determining appropriate cross protection measures.”, the text “cross” appears to be an error, this text should be “crossing”. Suggest reviewing, and revising this text, if deemed appropriate.

Caltrans agrees with comment that the text “cross” is an error. This text has been revised by changing it to “crossing”, as shown in para #05a of this section in Attachment A.

5. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Figure 7B-1(CA):** In lower figure titled “Urban Locations and Rural Locations with Sidewalk”, minimum clear width of travel or

lateral path width is missing. Suggest including minimum width of the pedestrian access route that needs to be maintained, as a reminder, when placing a signpost in the sidewalk.

Caltrans response to the comment in reviewing the NMUTCD 2023 Section 2A.16 titled "Lateral Offset", Figure 2A-2 titled "Examples of Heights and Lateral Locations of Sign Installations" and Figure 2A-3 titled "Examples of Locations for Some Typical Signs at Intersections", which apply to signs in general, lateral offset topic and minimum width criteria are included, the minimum clear width for pedestrian path is not included. Similar figures 2M-3, 6F-1, 8B-2 and 8B-3 do not show clear width for pedestrian path. The minimum clear width for pedestrian path is not shown as a dimension in any of the sign related figures of the NMUTCD. Comparing Figure 7B-1 (CA) lower figure for urban locations with NMUTCD 2023 Figure 2A-3 sub-heading "D – Urban Intersections" the signpost appears to be in between the sidewalk and the roadway. If a lateral width dimension were to be added to this Figure 7B-1 (CA) lower figure, it will not cover the sidewalk, as it will be between the roadway and signpost. Reviewing other figures in the NMUTCD, maintaining a 4-foot minimum pedestrian access route is included in NMUTCD 2023 Figure 4I-2 as a Note "3. A 4-foot minimum unobstructed pedestrian access route should be maintained."

Caltrans agrees to add: text under "Notes:" in this figure as "[A 4-foot minimum unobstructed pedestrian access route should be maintained.](#)" to address this comment. Figures for inclusion in CA MUTCD 2026 are being developed under a consultant contract, and not available currently. See note on page 11 of 34 of Attachment D.

6. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Figure 7B-1(CA):** In lower figure titled "Urban Locations and Rural Locations with Sidewalk", minimum mounting height for the rural location is 5 ft, not 7 ft, as shown in this figure.

Caltrans agrees with comment and will single line text "7 ft. Min." to two line text, with 1st line as "[7 ft. Min. \(Urban\)](#)" and second line as "[5 ft. Min. \(Rural\)](#)". See note on page 11 of 34 of Attachment D.

7. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Section 7B.02, para #01:** In second sentence, the text includes a strikethrough of text "...~~such as photo radar systems are used.~~". Suggest removing the strikethrough of this text and revising text to show it as "...such as photo radar systems, [when allowed by state law](#), are used".

Caltrans agrees with comment and has removed the strikethrough of this text, since CVC section 22425, amongst others, now allows the use of photo radar systems for specific local agencies. The strikethrough removal is shown in para #01 of this section in Attachment C.

Caltrans disagrees with comment to include adding text "[when allowed by state law](#)", for simplicity as it is unnecessary since California law is now allowing it for few

specific local agencies. Before it was not allowed for any agency in California, hence the strikethrough of the text. This strikethrough of the text was included in previous versions of CA MUTCD to reflect lack of legal authority to use photo radar systems for this purpose in California. In 2023, in response to AB 645, CVC 22425 effective 1/1/2024 allows specific local agencies to establish program for speed enforcement that utilizes speed safety system to detect violation by means of "automated speed violation".

8. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Section 7B.02, para #08 and #12:** Text in para #12 states "The School Warning Assembly A(CA) does not need to be posted ...". Text in para #08 states "The School Warning Assembly A(CA) shall be used ...". Suggest moving para #12 above para #08 to provide clarity and ease of use.

Caltrans agrees with comment and has moved para #12 above para #08, as shown in Attachment C.

9. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Figure 7B-1 (Sheet 1 of 2):** The text shown with an asterisk that begins "* If used, the assembly or sign with WHEN FLASHING legend..." needs to include a strikethrough of this text, to be consistent with the strikethrough of "WHEN FLASHING" text at all instances in the manual.

Caltrans agrees with comment and will add a strikethrough of this text shown as "~~* If used, the assembly or sign with WHEN FLASHING legend...~~" in Attachment D. See page 8 of 34 of Attachment D.

10. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Section 7B.05, para #16:** For the sub-heading text above para #16 "EXTENDED 25 MPH AND/OR REDUCED SPEEDS IN SCHOOL ZONES" add CVC section reference that authorizes it.

Caltrans agrees with comment and has added text to the sub-heading text "... (CVC 22352)", as shown in Attachment C.

11. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Section 7B.05, para #26:** For the sub-heading text above para #26 "EXTENDED 25 MPH AND/OR REDUCED SPEEDS IN SCHOOL ZONES" add CVC section reference that authorizes it.

Caltrans agrees with comment and has added text to the sub-heading text "... (CVC 22358.4)", as shown in Attachment C.

12. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Section 7B.06:** This entire section is deleted, and the entire section text has a strikethrough added to it. Add a support statement explaining the reason for the strikethrough. Add text that this section is only applicable if state law is enacted.

Caltrans agrees with comment and a support statement has been added in this section as para #00, as shown in Attachment C, explaining the reason for the strikethrough of the entire section text.

Caltrans disagrees with comment to add text that this section is only applicable if state law is enacted, as it will result in providing conflicting information, as the added statement will imply that this is applicable, while the strikethrough of the section text clearly indicates that it cannot be used. If the section text strikethrough was removed and the suggested text added that it is only applicable if state law is enacted, then it risks being used by practitioners, who may ignore the added text statement. Removing strikethrough of text and adding text that this section does not apply, will also not be consistent with similar instances in the CA MUTCD and how they are addressed. Any topics that are not applicable in California are simply denoted with the use of strikethrough for the text contents and blue "X" for the figure contents. Currently, there is no law supporting "Higher" fines in school areas in California. As per NMUTCD 2023 Section 1D.02, para #02, "All regulatory traffic control devices shall be supported by laws, ordinances, or regulations".

13. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7B, Section 7B.07, para #04:** This paragraph appears to be in the wrong section, as its topic pertains to street closures and Section 7B.07 is for parking and stopping signs. It needs to be relocated to another section.

Caltrans agrees with comment, this para #04 text has been moved to Section 7A.02 para #11 for School Route Plans and School Crossings, as shown in Attachment C, due to impact of street closures on street crossings, as indicated in the text of this para #04.

14. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7D, Section 7D.01, para #05:** Suggest adding text "...temporarily or permanently..." for the sentence to read as "Adult Crossing Guards may be temporarily or permanently assigned at designated school crossings to ..." to designate that the need may be short-term or long-term.

Caltrans agrees with comment, and has added this text in para #05, as shown in Attachment H.

15. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7D, Section 7D.01:** This section provides policies and criteria on using adult crossing guards at school crossings. It does not include any information on discontinuing the use of adult crossing guards at school crossings. Suggest adding information on discontinuing the use adult crossing guards at school crossings.

Caltrans agrees with comment, that this section, and chapter, do not include information on discontinuing the use of adult crossing guards at school crossings. New text has been added in Section 7D.01 as para #09, as shown in Attachment H, providing information on discontinuing the use of adult crossing guards at school

crossings when the school crossing no longer meets the conditions under which adult crossing guards were used.

- 16. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 7D, Section 7D.01, para #07 & #08:** under the sub-heading “Criteria for Adult Crossing Guards”, detailed criteria and conditions that were included in the current CA MUTCD 2014R8 to evaluate and identify school crossings that need to be considered for using adult crossing guards, has been deleted and is no longer included in this draft proposal. These criteria and conditions pertained to number of school pedestrians in a time period, vehicular traffic and turning movement volumes, vehicle speeds, number of lanes and conducting operational analysis. Many local agencies do use these criteria and conditions to identify crossing guard locations. Removal of this criteria and conditions, and the absence of a document where this criteria and conditions would be available once it is deleted from the current manual, will pose a significant issue for many local agencies that currently use this criteria and conditions. If the criteria and conditions were moved to another document, and it was available as a reference to local agencies, then its removal from this document would be acceptable. It was acknowledged that there may be concerns with this criteria and conditions have remain unchanged since they were developed and included in the Traffic Manual in 1971, and there may be a need to validate it for any needed updates.

Caltrans review of this comment indicated that the reason for proposing to delete these criteria and conditions was based on public comments and SME WG Part 7 members comments that the criteria and conditions were arbitrary, do not include local conditions and are rarely used by local agencies. It was also expressed that the text in these criteria gives the appearance of informal warrants and there are local conditions not included in these criteria that can affect pedestrian safety. Appearance of informal warrants and lack of local conditions limits exercising of engineering judgment and consideration of local conditions. These criteria first appeared in the 1971 version of the Traffic Manual (dated 7/19/1971) as Chapter 10 titled "School Crossing Protection", Section 10-08.2 titled "Warrants for Assignment of Adult Crossing Guards". Hence, as per the SME WG members and public comment, it is based on the warrant text in Traffic Manual, although the text “warrant” was deleted in later editions. All values included in these criteria are unchanged and have been carried over into future versions of the Traffic Manual and CA MUTCD from 1971 to the current CA MUTCD 2014R8. The source for these values, other than this specific Traffic Manual reference, aren't available and couldn't be found.

Caltrans agrees with comment, and deleted para #04 and #05 text of the current CA MUTCD 2014R8 pertaining to this criteria and conditions has been restored in para #07 and #08, with one change. Para #08 text that was an Option in para #05 of current CA MUTCD 2014R8, has now been changed to Support in para #08 of

this proposed document, as shown in Attachment H. Caltrans may coordinate under a separate effort to move these criteria to another, yet to be identified document. Caltrans will assess the viability of removing these criteria in a future revision of the CA MUTCD only after any such effort is completed and the separate document is available to local agencies.

Caltrans staff had shared the details of the CTCDC November 7, 2024, meeting discussions with the members of the SME WG on Part 7. Caltrans plans to share the outcome of the review and decisions in response to CTCDC recommendation on this item with the SME WG members to make them aware of them.

Caltrans has prepared the finalized proposal on CA MUTCD 2026 Part 7, incorporating CTCDC recommendation and Caltrans decisions, and it is attached to this agenda item. It is being provided for review to the CTCDC members and the public to share Caltrans decision on the CTCDC comments that were provided. Upon receiving formal CTCDC recommendation to finalize CA MUTCD 2026 Part 7 proposal, it will be revised as per the CTCDC passing motion details and then submitted to FHWA CA Division for review and determination of “substantial conformance” finding with the National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition).

Attachments:

[Attachment A – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7A Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment B – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7A Draft \(Figure Mark-ups\)](#)

[Attachment C – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7B Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment D – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7B Draft \(Figure Mark-ups\)](#)

[Attachment E – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7B Draft \(Table Mark-ups\)](#)

[Attachment F – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7C Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment G – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7C Draft \(Figure Mark-ups\)](#)

[Attachment H – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 7D Draft \(Text\)](#)