

Meeting Date: July 8, 2025 Item Number: 25-01	From: Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans
Sponsored By: Amjad Obeid, Caltrans	Presented By: Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans
Description: Request for review and recommendation to finalize CA MUTCD 2026 Part 1 titled "General" proposed documents that have been revised in response to CTCDC comments provided to Caltrans on February 6, 2025, meeting and are being prepared to adopt Federal Highway Administration's National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition) before the January 18, 2026, deadline.	

Recommendation:

Motion by committee, recommending Caltrans to finalize and prepare the CA MUTCD 2026 Part 1 titled "General" draft documents and incorporate them into 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:

The National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition) is published by Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) under 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 655, Subpart F. On December 19, 2023, a Final Rule adopting the National MUTCD 2023 was published in the Federal Register with an effective date of January 18, 2024. States must adopt the National MUTCD as their legal State standard for traffic control devices within two years from the effective date (January 18, 2026, deadline).

The webpage on California's National MUTCD 2023 review and adoption efforts is available per below and provides details and information on:

<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/camutcd/nmutcd>

- National MUTCD 2023,
- FHWA's substantial conformance requirements,
- Dates and deadline for compliance,
- California's review and adoption process, including:
 - Timelines and schedules,
 - Subject Matter Experts Workgroup member reviews,
 - Public review opportunities,
 - CTCDC engagements, and

- o CA MUTCD 2026 draft documents

CA MUTCD 2026 Part 1 final draft documents were reviewed and discussed with the CTCDC members and the public during the February 6, 2025, CTCDC meeting. Several CTCDC members, FHWA CA Division representative and some members of the public provided comments to Caltrans during this meeting on the proposed CA MUTCD 2026 Part 1 documents. These CA MUTCD 2026 Part 1 proposed documents and the meeting minutes of the meeting discussions and comments provided to Caltrans during the meeting are available (refer to agenda item 25-01 document and its attachments) at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/ctcdc/meetings>.

The February 6, 2025, meeting discussions resulted in the CTCDC providing multiple comments to Caltrans. CTCDC requested Caltrans to review and address the comments provided, by revising the proposed draft documents and sharing the outcome and resolution to the comments with CTCDC in a future meeting.

Summary of the CTCDC meeting comments provided on February 6, 2025, meeting and Caltrans review, response and resolution to these comments, is as follows:

1. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1A, Section 1A.01, Paragraph 08:**

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal First sentence reads:

“This California MUTCD incorporates Federal Highway Administration’s Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (11th Edition) published on December 19, 2023, and the previous California MUTCD 2014 Revision 8, dated January 11, 2024.”

CTCDC member comment: The reference to previous California MUTCD 2014 Revision 8, dated January 11, 2024, doesn’t seem to be necessary. For sake of clarity, consider removing this reference, as by the time CA MUTCD 2026 is adopted, it will no longer be effective. If keeping the reference, suggestion was made to revise text to say, “it is based on”, as opposed to “incorporates”.

Caltrans disagrees with comment as the purpose of this sentence in the paragraph is to state which specific documents are incorporated within this newly developed CA MUTCD 2026. This sentence is not focusing on, or implying which manual is effective and/or which manual is obsolete. This sentence is simply providing information on the specific manuals (including their exact versions) that were used and incorporated in this newly developed CA MUTCD 2026. In response to the suggestion to use “it is based on” instead of “incorporates”, that would not be appropriate. Code of Federal Regulations Title 23, Chapter I, Subchapter G, Part 655, Subpart F, Section 655.603 requirements include language that the state manuals need to be in “substantial conformance” and shall “adopt” changes, which are implied by the use of word “incorporates” and not the word “based”.

2. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1A, Section 1A.05, Paragraph 05:**

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal: Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05 includes list of publications references that only appear multiple times or are referenced in multiple sections of this manual.

CTCDC member comment: Suggest including publication reference on California Building Code for ADA.

Caltrans disagrees with comment as the publications referenced in Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05 are the publications that are referenced in multiple sections of the CA MUTCD or appear multiple times in the CA MUTCD. Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05 does not include any publication that appears only once, or in a single section of CA MUTCD. For publications appearing only once, or in a single section of CA MUTCD, they are included in the specific section of the CA MUTCD, where they appear. Reference to California Building Code appears only in a single section, Section 2B.46, of CA MUTCD 2014R9 for accessible parking space signs and markings. Similarly, CA MUTCD 2026 draft proposal also includes the reference to California Building Code only in a single section, Section 2B.52. Since the current reference to California Building Code appears only in a single section of CA MUTCD, this reference was deleted from list of publications in Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05.

3. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1A, Section 1A.05, Paragraph 05 and Chapter 1B, Section 1B.02, Paragraphs 05 to 09:**

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal: Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05 includes list of publications references that appear multiple times and are referenced in multiple sections of this manual. Section 1B.02 Paragraphs 05 to 09 references several publications that would constitute as examples of the supplemental documents to the CA MUTCD, as intended by the Code of Federal Regulation requirements.

CTCDC member comment: The publications referenced in these two sections are inconsistent, they need to be reviewed to resolve any inconsistencies.

Caltrans disagrees with comment as the publications referenced in these two sections, 1A.05 and 1B.02, are on different topics and are intended for different purposes. Publications referenced in Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05 are the publications that are referenced in multiple sections of the CA MUTCD and appear multiple times in the CA MUTCD. Section 1A.05 Paragraph 05 does not include any publication that appears only once, or in a single section of CA MUTCD. For publications appearing only once, or in a single section of CA MUTCD, they are included in the specific section of the CA MUTCD, where they appear. Publications referenced in Section 1B.02 Paragraphs 05 to 09, although not a complete list, they are included to show examples of Caltrans publications that would constitute as CA MUTCD supplemental documents, as implied by 23 CFR 655.603(b)(1), which states “...**supplemental documents that a State issues, including but not limited to**

policies, directives, standard drawings or details, and specifications". Any Caltrans publication and/or document would constitute as CA MUTCD supplemental document, if it included any traffic control device topic(s). All publications referenced in Section 1B.02 Paragraphs 05 to 09 are CA MUTCD supplemental documents, as even though they are focused on, and/or include other topics as primary content, they include traffic control device topic(s). Some of these publications include traffic control device related contents that are more stringent (higher standard) than those shown in the California MUTCD, as these publications represent the minimum Caltrans standards for traffic control device topics. CA MUTCD represents the minimum state standards and NMUTCD, the minimum national standards, for traffic control devices. All CA MUTCD supplemental documents, including these example publications, per 23 CFR 655.603(b)(1), are required to conform to, or not contravene or negate, any Standard and Guidance statements, figures, or tables of the California MUTCD. Hence the publications referenced in the two sections, 1A.05 and 1B.02, are on different topics and do not need to be consistent with each other.

4. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.02, Paragraph #02a:**

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal Paragraph #02a includes text "**Caltrans needs to revise the CA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) 2014 Revision 8 (issued on January 11, 2024) to bring it into substantial conformance with FHWA's National MUTCD 2023 and issue the revised CA MUTCD on or before January 18, 2026.**"

CTCDC member comment: This statement is unnecessary as the CA MUTCD would have been revised by the time this text is actually part of the manual. If needed, the statement could be more general, about the process and the two-year time period, as opposed to exact dates.

CTCDC public comment: Suggest providing this information as an interstitial comment. So instead of providing this information as proposed CA MUTCD content, providing it as a comment stating that this is the adoption process/timetable and avoid including specific dates in the regulatory part of the document.

Caltrans agrees with comment and revises the text to "**California does not automatically adopt the National MUTCD immediately upon the effective date of the latest edition or revision of the National MUTCD. Caltrans revises the current CA MUTCD to adopt changes issued by FHWA to the National MUTCD, and to bring it into substantial conformance with the National MUTCD, within two years from the effective date of the final rule. Refer to Section 1A.01 for information on Caltrans' CA MUTCD annual revision cycle.**".

5. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.02, Paragraph #06:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes text “**On State highways, the California MUTCD shall mean to include, but not limited to, supplemental documents (for the traffic control device topic portion of the contents), such as Caltrans’ publications of Standard Plans, Standard Specifications, Standard Special Provisions, Proven Safety Countermeasure publications, California Manual for Setting Speed Limits, other manuals, Traffic Calming Guide, other guidelines, Flagging Instructions Handbook, other handbooks, pamphlets, bulletins (including Traffic Safety Bulletins) and memos (including Traffic Operation Policy Directives (TOPD)).**”

CTCDC member comment: For reference to Proven Safety Countermeasure publication, not sure what is this reference. Suggest adding a hyperlink to the reference for the actual publication.

CTCDC member comment: Consider adding hyperlinks to other references, such as California Vehicle Code, Streets and Highways Code and others.

CTCDC member comment: Adding links within the document and to external documents can be time consuming, consider only if staff time permits, while ensuring timely completion and update of the CA MUTCD.

CTCDC public comment: If adding hyperlinks to external references, it implies a commitment to periodically check and update all hyperlinks provided in the manual.

Caltrans agrees with these comments: Adding links to external documents and web sites, to select in-text web site URLs and references to external documents, allowing direct access to the web page or document will be informative and improve usability of CA MUTCD. As indicated in comments above, this effort can be time consuming and also requires continued commitment to periodically check and update these links. Caltrans plans to undertake this task, to add links to external documents in CA MUTCD, as a separate effort which can be conducted either after the release of CA MUTCD 2026 or if time permits, at the end of the CA MUTCD 2026 finalization effort. In the meantime, information on accessing these CA MUTCD supplemental documents has been added as a new Support paragraph with web links. Caltrans, following in FHWA footsteps, will develop Hotlinks version of the CA MUTCD 2026, after its release, and make it available. The Hotlink version of the CA MUTCD 2026 will also include internal hotlinks to navigate within CA MUTCD to access other Parts, Chapters, Sections, Figures, Tables, Pages, or Appendix and also include Known Errors at appropriate locations within CA MUTCD.

Caltrans plans, before issuing CA MUTCD 2026, to: add links to external documents and hopefully, develop the hotlink version of the manual soon after its release.

6. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.03, Paragraph #14:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes text “**Agencies may install traffic control devices included in previously approved construction plans that comply with the previous version of CA MUTCD.**”

CTCDC member comment: Suggest changing this text to “**Agencies may install traffic control devices included in previously approved construction plans that complied with the previous version of CA MUTCD at the time of plan approval.**”

CTCDC member comment: Suggest adding a guidance section to articulate the obligation of an agency, to comply with the new or current CA MUTCD and flexibility allowed to comply with previous versions of CA MUTCD on construction projects with approved construction plans.

FHWA CA Division representative clarified: Agencies are obligated to comply with the current CA MUTCD based on its effective date. Construction projects with approved construction plans are allowed flexibility to comply with the previous versions of CA MUTCD, depending on the status of the traffic control devices in the construction project, if they have been ordered, received or installed on the roadway. This flexibility for construction projects with approved construction plans to comply with previous versions of CA MUTCD does not include traffic control devices with established target compliance dates.

FHWA CA Division agrees with the proposed text changes suggested for Paragraph 14 shown in red color text above.

FHWA CA Division disagrees with recommendation to further add a guidance statement to explain agency obligation, as the text already included in proposal is sufficient.

Caltrans & FHWA CA Division agree with comment: with the proposed text changes suggested for Paragraph 14 shown in red color text above, and the text has been revised to “**Agencies may install traffic control devices included in previously approved construction plans that complied with the previous version of CA MUTCD at the time of plan approval.**”

7. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.03, Table 1B-1 (Sheet 1 of 2):

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal In column “Compliance Date”, includes text “5 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD”, “September 6, 2026” and “10 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD”. Proposed table includes text comment to add text “January 18, 2029” for rows #2, #3, #4 & #6 in column #4 and “January 18, 2034” for row #7 in column #4, to reflect the NMUTCD 2023 effective date of January 18, 2024.

CTCDC member comment: requesting clarification if the text “5 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD” and “10 years from the effective date

of this edition of the MUTCD" will include a blue line strikethrough of this text and the dates "January 18, 2029" and "January 18, 2034" will be added?

Caltrans clarified that it was the intent, to include a blue line strikethrough of the text "5 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD" and "10 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD" and add the dates "January 18, 2029" and "January 18, 2034".

FHWA clarified that the actual dates of "January 18, 2029" and "January 18, 2034" can be added at the end of the text "5 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD" and the text "10 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD", respectively. The text "5 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD" and the text "10 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD" needs to remain as-is, it cannot be strikethrough text. Further, these dates need to be reflective of the NMUTCD 2023 effective date and cannot be based on the actual date when CA MUTCD 2026 gets issued and is effective.

Caltrans agrees with comment and based on FHWA's clarification, actual dates of "January 18, 2029" and "January 18, 2034" are added at the end of the text "5 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD" and the text "10 years from the effective date of this edition of the MUTCD", respectively in this table.

8. **CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.03, Table 1B-1 (Sheet 2 of 2) (Refer to Table I-2):**

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal Includes Table I-2 from the NMUTCD 2009 as Sheet 2 of 2 covering all target compliance dates established by FHWA in the NMUTCD 2009 Edition, for implementation of the particular changes in the MUTCD, as a historical reference.

CTCDC member comment: It is a good idea to include prior versions of the manuals for previously established target compliance dates, as a reminder to agencies. Suggest expanding this table to include other established target compliance dates in manuals prior to NMUTCD 2009.

Caltrans acknowledges support on including the NMUTCD 2009 table. Main purpose for including Table I-2 from the NMUTCD 2009, on FHWA established target compliance dates, is as a historical reference, since these target compliance dates are no longer included in the NMUTCD 2023. Another purpose for including this table with dates is that, although these dates were established in the NMUTCD 2009 and all these dates are now in the past, the actual requirement for implementation of the particular changes in the NMUTCD 2009 for the specific devices identified in this table are still valid, and apply to any of these devices, if they are still existing on the roadways. For these devices, unless the particular changes identified in the NMUTCD 2009 had already been implemented, these devices are required to be changed to comply with the NMUTCD 2009, regardless of the compliance date being in the past, and the table being not included in

NMUTCD 2023. This table is included in CA MUTCD 2026 to remind agencies of these requirements, for existing devices, if they needed to be changed.

Caltrans review indicated the FHWA manual prior to NMUTCD 2009, was NMUTCD 2003 Edition. The NMUTCD 2003 was the first manual that was adopted in California, when California transitioned from the Traffic Manual to the NMUTCD, during the initial adoption of the NMUTCD on 5/20/04. During its adoption, Caltrans was granted exceptions for non-compliance with the NMUTCD 2003 established target compliance dates, as part of the “grand-fathered” clause during this initial adoption. Refer to CAMUTCD 2006 pages I-5 through I-8 and text “**All these MUTCD target compliance dates (beginning with Section 2A.19 and ending with Section 10C.15) are deleted and shall not apply in California**”.

Caltrans agrees with comment, no change is needed: In response to comment to expand the table to include other established target compliance dates in manuals prior to NMUTCD 2009, based on Caltrans review, the only other established target compliance dates in manuals prior to NMUTCD 2009 was the NMUTCD 2003 established target compliance dates, which were never applicable in California, as Caltrans was granted exceptions for non-compliance as part of the “grand-fathered” clause. As a result of this, there are no other previously established target compliance dates that were applicable in California and could be included in the proposal.

9. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.05, Paragraphs #18 thru #36:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal Paragraphs 18 thru 36 include text related to CTCDC experimentation process that is specific to California.

CTCDC member comment: The text on the CTCDC experimentation process needs to be updated. If the review and update is going to be taken up in a separate effort, then prefer to hold comments for the separate effort.

Caltrans response: Review and revision of the CTCDC experimentation process is being undertaken in a separate effort and is not included in the NMUTCD 2023 review and adoption effort.

10. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1B, Section 1B.07, Paragraph #08a:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes text “**Currently, no interim approvals have been issued by FHWA on the National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition). Status of Interim Approvals issued by FHWA in California will be provided once FHWA issues the first interim approval for the National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition).**”.

CTCDC member comment: Suggest replacing word “currently” with word similar to “As of the effective date of this Manual”. If any interim approvals have been issued, then suggest using word similar to “As of the effective date of this Manual, the following interim approvals have occurred”.

Caltrans acknowledges comment: suggesting text to replace the word “currently”. This statement was added in the draft proposal to clarify that no interim approvals had been issued after the official rulemaking issuance of the National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition).

Caltrans review indicated: that FHWA had issued a new interim approval (IA-23) on January 8, 2025, that was recently posted on the MUTCD website. As a result of this, rather than addressing this comment per CTCDC suggestion, the text revision needs to be handled differently.

Caltrans is revising: this text and adding a new table to provide a reference for information on FHWA interim approvals and their status in California. Previously proposed text (shown as CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal above) is being deleted and new text is being added as “**Refer to Table 1B-101(CA) for the Interim Approvals issued by FHWA and their status in California.**” New Table 1B-101(CA) is also being added.

11. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes all 297 words and phrases from the NMUTCD 2023 and adds 45 words and phrases that are California specific while revising multiple NMUTCD 2023 words and phrases.

CTCDC member comment: Is there a need for adding new definitions? For example, in #43a “Consulting Engineer” was added. Is it used elsewhere in the Manual? Are we just adding things for the sake of adding things or is that intended to be used somewhere farther down the line. Suggest reviewing this entire section for all words and phrases that are being added or revised to ensure they all are actually being referenced and used in the manual.

Caltrans response: During the development of this proposal, all words, phrases and terms included in CA MUTCD 2014R9 were reviewed. In Section 1C.02 Paragraph 03, 31 CA added (blue text) words, phrases are from the CA MUTCD 2014R9, 14 new CA added (blue text) words and phrases are added based on the new CVC Sections. In Section 1C.02 Paragraph 04, 37 CA added (blue text) CVC section terms from the total 62 terms in CA MUTCD 2014R9 were retained. These 45 CA added words and phrases (blue text), and multiple revised NMUTCD 2023 words and phrases (revisions shown in blue text) and 37 CA added (blue text) CVC section terms, they all are being included in the proposal based on their inclusion in the manual contents, for informational purposes and to ensure consistency and relevance to traffic control device topics. They are not intended to simply enhance the list or make it comprehensive.

Caltrans agrees and reviewed again and thoroughly, after the February 6, 2025, meeting, all these words, phrases and terms that were being added or revised (shown in blue text), to verify for accuracy and validity, while also ensuring that each one is actually being referenced and used in the manual. Upon review, after

the February 6, 2025, meeting, additional 5 CA added (blue text) words and phrases are deleted, leaving 32 CA added (blue text) words and phrases from the original 62 words and phrases (in CA MUTCD 2014R9) or the 37 words and phrases from the February 6, 2025, meeting proposal. Further reviews are being conducted on 4 of these 32 words and phrases for validity and retaining in the manual.

Caltrans plans, before FHWA CA Division submittal, to complete the review of 4 of these remaining 32 CA added (blue text) words and phrases from this section and delete any words or phrases if they are no longer valid and/or not referenced or used in the manual.

12. CTCDC Comment – [Chapter 1C, Section 1C.03, Paragraph #02:](#)

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes 213 CA added (blue text) acronyms that are related to traffic control devices and provided for ease of use and as a handy reference.

CTCDC member comment: This list of acronyms and abbreviations is outdated, and if they are not used in CA MUTCD, suggest they be deleted. As an example, #27 CELSOC has been ACEC since about 2007, 2008, about 15 years ago.

Caltrans response: These 213 CA added (blue text) acronyms that were included in the February 6, 2025, meeting agenda item were part of the 237 acronyms that were originally developed during the adoption of the NMUTCD 2009 and included in the CA MUTCD 2012. They were reviewed during the development of this proposal and 24 acronyms were deleted, while 213 were retained, as per February 6, 2025, meeting agenda item.

Caltrans agrees and reviewed again and thoroughly, after the February 6, 2025, meeting, these 213 CA added (blue text) acronyms, to verify for accuracy and validity, while also ensuring that each one is actually being referenced and used in the manual. Upon review, after the February 6, 2025, meeting, additional 152 CA added (blue text) acronyms are deleted, leaving 61 CA added (blue text) acronyms from the original 237 acronyms (in CA MUTCD 2014R9) or the 213 acronyms from the February 6, 2025, meeting proposal. Further reviews are being conducted on 20 of these 61 acronyms for validity and retaining in the manual.

Caltrans plans, before FHWA CA Division submittal, to complete the review of 20 of these remaining 71 CA added (blue text) acronyms from this section and delete any acronyms if they are no longer valid and/or not referenced or used in the manual.

13. CTCDC Comment – [Chapter 1C, Sections 1C.02 and 1C.03:](#)

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal in Section 1C.02 Paragraph 03, includes all 297 words and phrases from the NMUTCD 2023 and adds 45 words and phrases that are California specific while revising multiple NMUTCD 2023 words and phrases. Section 1C.02 added 37 CVC Section terms. In Section 1C.02 Paragraph 04, includes 37 CA

added (blue text) CVC Section terms. In Section 1C.03 Paragraph 02 added 213 acronyms related to traffic control devices.

CTCDC member comment: All definitions (meanings), abbreviations and acronyms should be cross-checked with the CA MUTCD in its entirety and only those that are referenced should be included.

Caltrans agrees to review again and thoroughly all these words, phrases, terms and acronyms, to verify for accuracy and validity, while also ensuring that each one is actually being referenced and used in the manual. As indicated in response to similar comments, this effort has begun and is being conducted, it is time consuming and will be completed before finalization and submittal to FHWA CA Division for “substantial conformance” check. Refer to response on Comments #11 and #12 for more details.

Caltrans plans, before FHWA CA Division submittal, to remove any CA added (blue text) words, phrases, terms and acronyms from the relevant sections, if they are no longer valid and/or not referenced or used in the manual. Refer to response on Comments #11 and #12 for more details.

14. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #31a:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal

31a. Business Activity District – As per CVC Section 22358.9(b), a “business activity district” is that portion of a highway and the property contiguous thereto that includes central or neighborhood downtowns, urban villages, or zoning designations that prioritize commercial land uses at the downtown or neighborhood scale and meets at least three of the following requirements in paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive:

- (a) No less than 50 percent of the contiguous property fronting the highway consists of retail or dining commercial uses, including outdoor dining, that open directly onto sidewalks adjacent to the highway.**
- (b) Parking, including parallel, diagonal, or perpendicular spaces located alongside the highway.**
- (c) Traffic control signals or stop signs regulating traffic flow on the highway, located at intervals of no more than 600 feet.**
- (d) Marked crosswalks not controlled by a traffic control device.**

CTCDC member comment: In text for definition #31a, the text includes “...in paragraphs (1) to (4) ...” does it mean “...in paragraphs (a) to (d)...”?

Caltrans clarifies: Yes, those are the intended paragraphs. Upon reviewing CVC Section and CA MUTCD 2026 proposed text, the text “...in paragraphs (1) to (4),...” is correct, while the text for the individually numbered paragraphs “(a)”, “(b)”, “(c)” and “(d)” are incorrect, they need to be renumbered as “(1)”, “(2)”, “(3)”

and “(4)”. This discrepancy occurred due to the Word document formatting style used in the document, that defaulted to the system formatting style for the bullets. **Caltrans agrees with comment:** and has revised this text to use and reflect the bulleted numbering exactly as shown in the official CVC publication, for accuracy and to avoid confusion on the definition text.

Caltrans plans, before issuing CA MUTCD 2026, to: also check all other CVC section text that is included in this section to ensure accurate reflection of the CVC section text bullets and numbering scheme as shown in the official CVC publication.

15. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #44a:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal Includes

44a. Contraflow Bicycle Lane – A contraflow bicycle lane is an area of the roadway designated to allow for the lawful use by bicyclists to travel in the opposite direction from vehicular traffic on a roadway that allows vehicular traffic to travel in only one direction. Also see Class II and Class IV Bikeways.

CTCDC member comment: This proposal is using the term “**Contraflow**” for use in California, while the NMUTCD is using the term “**Counter-Flow**”. Suggest using the NMUTCD terminology, unless there is a specific need to introduce a similar, but different term.

CTCDC member comment: There is value in retaining some reference to “Contraflow” term as Caltrans Highway Design Manual uses this term in reference to Class II bike lanes.

Caltrans review indicated: that the term “**Contraflow**” included in proposal was based on current CA MUTCD 2014R9 Chapter 1A, Section 1A.13, Paragraph #02, bullet #31f and used in Part 9. This term was originally added in CA MUTCD in response to CTCDC Agenda Item 14-20 titled “Proposal to adopt Buffered Bicycle Lane, Contra Flow Bicycle Lane, Intersection Bicycle Lane Marking by amending Section 9C.04 of CA MUTCD” and discussed in the September 25, 2014, CTCDC Meeting. This proposal to add “Contraflow Bicycle Lane” definition, amongst other text additions, was in follow up to Caltrans’ Director’s April 10, 2014, endorsement of National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide to improve Caltrans design of bike and pedestrian facilities. NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide has also been endorsed by FHWA.

This 14-20 agenda item proposal text addition (including “Contraflow Bicycle Lane” definition) was developed by The National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD) developed the text included in this CTCDC agenda item 14-20 and provided it to FHWA as a proposal to revise National MUTCD in June 2014. FHWA added the term “**Counter-Flow**” in NMUTCD 2023 instead of the term “**contraflow**” that was recommended by NCUTCD, as referenced in Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #48. The two terms, “**Counter-Flow**” and “**Contraflow**” are similar to each other.

The term “**Contraflow**” used in CA MUTCD 214R9, is also used in Caltrans Highway Design Manual.

Caltrans agrees with comment: after reviewing this change internally with other stakeholders, who were agreeable to the change in terminology. FHWA potentially considered NCUTCD’s proposal to use term “**Contraflow**” and then decided to use the term “**Counter-Flow**” in NMUTCD 2023, instead of “**Contraflow**”. Caltrans use of the term “**Contraflow**” in 2014 per CTCDC agenda item 14-20 was also based on the same NCUTCD proposal, Caltrans will follow FHWA lead, in the interest of national uniformity, to use the term “**Counter-Flow**” instead of the term “**Contraflow**” in the finalized proposal. The term “**Contraflow**”, due to its past usage in CA MUTCD and its usage in Highway Design Manual, will be retained only as a reference to the term “**Counter-Flow**” in bullet #44a, and the term “**Counter-Flow Bicycle Lane**” will be added as #47a with a reference to see Class II and Class IV Bikeways. The term “**Contraflow**” will be replaced with the NMUTCD term “**Counter-Flow**” for all instances where it appears in the entire CA MUTCD 2026 document.

Caltrans Division of Design preliminary review: This change has been shared with Caltrans Division of Design for consideration of any needed revisions to the Highway Design Manual and/or Design Information Bulletins. Caltrans Division of Design’s initial assessment is agreeable to this change, which could be implement following the issuance of CA MUTCD 2026 by revising relevant text in HDM Index 301.2 Class II Bikeway & DIB 89-02 contents in Spring of 2026.

16. CTCDC Comment – [Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #59:](#)

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

59. Detector—a device used for determining the presence or passage of motor vehicles, (including motorcycles), bicycles, or pedestrians.

CTCDC member comment: There is an extra comma before the parenthetical text.

Caltrans agrees with comment and has revised text to remove the extra comma.

17. CTCDC Comment – [Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #61a:](#)

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

61a. Divided Highway – A highway with separated roadbeds for traffic in opposing directions. Refer to Caltrans’ Highway Design Manual Index 62.3.(5)(f).

CTCDC member comment: Proposal includes a couple of periods in a row.

Caltrans agrees with comment and has revised text to remove the extra period.

18. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #113:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

113. Intersection—intersection is defined as follows: **As per CVC 365, an "intersection" is the area embraced within the prolongation of the lateral curb lines, or, if none, then the lateral boundary lines of the roadways, of two highways which join one another at approximately right angles or the area within which vehicles traveling upon different highways joining at any other angle may come in conflict.**

- (a) The area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines, or if none, the lateral boundary lines of the roadways of two highways that join one another at, or approximately at, right angles, or the area within which vehicles traveling on different highways that join at any other angle might come into conflict.
- (b) The junction of an alley, driveway, or site roadway with a public roadway or highway shall not constitute an intersection, unless the public roadway or highway at said junction is controlled by a traffic control device.
- (c) If a highway includes two roadways separated by a median, then every crossing of each roadway of such divided highway by an intersecting highway shall be a separate intersection if the opposing left-turn paths cross and there is sufficient interior storage for the design vehicle (see Figure 2A-5).
- (d) At a location controlled by a traffic control signal, regardless of the distance between the separate intersections as defined in (c) above:
 - 1. If a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk has not been designated on the roadway (within the median) between the separate intersections, the two intersections and the roadway (median) between them shall be considered as one intersection;
 - 2. Where a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk is designated on the roadway on the intersection approach, the area within the crosswalk and/or beyond the designated stop line or yield line shall be part of the intersection; and
 - 3. Where a crosswalk is designated on a roadway on the departure from the intersection, the intersection shall include the area extending to the far side of such crosswalk.

CTCDC member comment: The definition added in the proposal (shown in blue text) from the CVC is nearly identical, if not identical, to NMUTCD text included in subparagraph (a). Is there is a reason for including the CVC definition? If not, suggest deleting the blue text and including only a reference to CVC.

Caltrans review indicated: Upon comparison, the CVC Section 365 is shown below as:

An "intersection" is the area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines, or, if none, then the lateral boundary lines of the roadways,

of two highways which **that** join one another at **or** approximately **at** right angles or the area within which vehicles traveling upon **on** different highways joining **that join** at any other angle may come in **into** conflict.

- **text highlighted in yellow color** where it differs from the NMUTCD text
- **black text highlighted in yellow color** as NMUTCD text
- **blue text highlighted in yellow color** as CVC text that is not included in NMUTCD

Caltrans disagrees with comment: as although these text changes appear to be minor, due to this text being a legal reference, and due to the fact that all other CVC section references in this proposal have been included with entire CVC Section text, Caltrans prefers to retain the entire text of CVC section 365. Upon review, this CVC section 365 text will be moved from its current location in bullet #113 and added after the sentence in #113 bullet "(a)".

19. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #124b:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

124b. Limit Line Detection Zone – a Referenced Bicycle-Rider must be detected in a 6 x 6 feet area immediately behind the limit line, centered either in a normal width lane or if the lane is more than 12 feet wide, centered 6 feet from the left lane line. For a lane of 20 feet or greater, two minimum 6 x 6 feet areas shall constitute the Limit Line Detection Zone.

CTCDC member comment: Suggest adding to the phrase Limit Line Detection Zone, the word Bicycle, as Limit Line Bicycle Detection Zone because in common usage, Limit Line Detection Zone could also refer to a vehicle.

Caltrans agrees with comment The term "**Limit Line Detection Zone**" is used for bicycle and motorcycle detection as per current CA MUTCD 2014R9 Chapter 4D, Section 4D.105(CA) titled "**Bicycle/Motorcycle Detection**" which in CA MUTCD 2026 will be in Chapter 4H as per the reorganized NMUTCD 2023. Upon further review, and checking with CA MUTCD Part 4 topic owners, this term for all purposes is intended primarily to detect a bicyclist, which ensures motorcycle detection as well. Agree with comment to revise the term "**Limit Line Detection Zone**" to "**Limit Line Bicycle Detection Zone**" for all occurrences in the CA MUTCD 2026 proposal.

20. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #146b and related #141c, #141d, #141e, #164 and #272:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

141c. Motorized Bicycle -or "moped" is a two-wheeled or three-wheeled device having fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power or having no pedals if powered solely by electrical energy, and an automatic transmission and a motor that produces less than 4 gross brake horsepower and is capable

of propelling the device at a maximum speed of not more than 30 miles per hour on level ground. Refer to CVC 406.

141d. Motorized Quadricycle - a four-wheeled device, and a “motorized tricycle” is a three-wheeled device, designed to carry not more than two persons, including the driver, and having either an electric motor or a motor with an automatic transmission developing less than two gross brake horsepower and capable of propelling the device at a maximum speed of not more than 30 miles per hour on level ground. The device shall be utilized only by a person who by reason of physical disability is otherwise unable to move about as a pedestrian or by a senior citizen. Refer to CVC 407.

141e. Motorized Scooter -any two-wheeled device that has handlebars, has either a floorboard that is designed to be stood upon when riding or a seat and footrests in place of the floorboard, and is powered by an electric motor. This device may also be designed to be powered by human propulsion. Refer to CVC 407.5.

146b. Non-motorized Traffic – Bicycle and pedestrian component of traffic.

164. Pedestrian—a person on foot, in a wheelchair, on other devices determined by local law to be equivalent, which might include skates or a skateboard. As per CVC 467, (a) A “pedestrian” is a person who is afoot or who is using any of the following: 1. A means of conveyance propelled by human power other than a bicycle. 2. An electric personal assistive mobility device. (b) “Pedestrian” includes a person who is operating a self-propelled wheelchair, motorized tricycle, or motorized quadricycle and, by reason of physical disability, is otherwise unable to move about as a pedestrian, as specified in subdivision(a).

272. Traffic—pedestrians, bicyclists, ridden or herded animals, vehicles, streetcars, and other conveyances either singularly or together while using for purposes of travel any highway or site roadway open to public travel. (see definition of private road open to public travel). As per CVC 620, the term “traffic” includes pedestrians, ridden animals, vehicles, street cars, and other conveyances, either singly or together, while using any highway for purposes of travel.

CTCDC member comment: The term “non-motorized traffic” needs to be reconciled with “traffic”, “pedestrian” and motorized micromobility device definitions. Review instances of the term “non-motorized traffic” and provide context in which it is used or revise the term or delete it from the definitions in this section.

Caltrans review indicated that in the CA MUTCD 2014R9, the term “non-motorized traffic” is used only 2 times. Both instances of use are in Section 2B.39. Section 2B.39 Paragraph 03 National MUTCD uses it as the word message on R5-7 sign and Paragraph 22 CA added text uses it in conjunction with CVC 21960 to prohibit or restrict the use of freeways by pedestrians, bicycles or other non-motorized traffic or by any person operating a motor-driven cycle or a motorized bicycle.

Caltrans agrees with comment Due to the single CA added text usage of this term “non-motorized traffic”, agree to delete this term from the definitions in this section.

21. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #200a:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

200a. Resident District -As per CVC 515, a portion of a highway and the property contiguous thereto, other than a business district,

(a) upon one side of which highway, within a distance of a quarter of a mile, the contiguous property fronting thereon is occupied by 13 or more separate dwelling houses or business structures, or

(b) upon both sides of which highway, collectively, within a distance of a quarter of a mile, the contiguous property fronting thereon is occupied by 16 or more separate dwelling houses or business structures.

A residence district may be longer than one-quarter of a mile if the above ratio of separate dwelling houses or business structures to the length of the highway exists. Refer to CVC Sections 235 and 240, to determine whether a highway is within a business or residence district.

CTCDC member comment: The term “Resident District” is “Residence District”.

Caltrans agrees with comment Upon reviewing CVC 515, agree this to be an error and has corrected the term by changing it to “Residence District”.

22. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1C, Section 1C.02, Paragraph #03, bullet #219:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

219. Shared-Use Path (Class I Bikeway) —a bikeway outside the traveled way and physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent alignment. Shared-use paths are also used by pedestrians (including skaters, users of manual and motorized wheelchairs, and joggers) and other authorized motorized and non-motorized users. Refer to the Caltrans' Highway Design Manual Index 1003.1 for design criteria.

CTCDC member comment: The reference to Highway Design Manual for design criteria is used in this definition, it is inconsistent with the definitions and not appropriate as it refers to design criteria. Consider deleting it from this section.

Caltrans agrees with comment and the reference to Highway Design Manual has been deleted.

23. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1D, Section 1D.01, Paragraph #04:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

*Design, placement, operation, maintenance, and uniformity are aspects that should be carefully considered **by the engineer** in order to maximize the ability of a traffic control device to be consistent with the five principles listed in Paragraph 3 of this Section.*

CTCDC member comment: Suggest removing the text “**by the engineer**”.

Caltrans & FHWA CA Division disagree with comment: California Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists' Professional Engineers (PE) Act is included in Business and Professions Code Section 6700 to 6799 and is available at https://www.bpelsg.ca.gov/laws/pe_act.pdf. In reviewing the PE Act, “placement, operations, maintenance and uniformity” aspects of traffic control devices are all directly tied to investigation, evaluation, planning or design of public and private projects, including supervision of construction for compliance with specifications and design of the project. These traffic control device aspects require compliance with plans, specifications and design concepts and are included in designs, plans and specifications of the projects and engineering reports. Refer to Business and Professions Code Sections 6701, 6703, 6703.1, 6731 and 6731.3. Caltrans conducts an Annual Maintenance Conference which includes Caltrans engineers sharing information on changes in CA MUTCD that impact routine maintenance activities pertaining to traffic control devices. This conference includes identifying compliant and non-compliant devices, criteria and assessment methods to use when evaluating the need to replace or refurbish these devices and engaging traffic safety engineers, as needed, for determination of devices being compliant/non-compliant devices. Reasons for this is that engineer review is essential in the maintenance process, any small changes due to maintenance of the device could have unintended consequences for road users, which may not be compliant with CA MUTCD or isn't what the engineer originally intended for that location. Inclusion of the text “**by the engineer**” is important and necessary in this paragraph and Caltrans plans to retain this text. This comment was shared with FHWA CA Division to receive their input. FHWA CA Division agreed with Caltrans and supports retaining the text “**by the engineer**” in this paragraph.

24. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1D, Section 1D.02, Paragraph #01a:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

In addition to California MUTCD, Caltrans publishes various supplemental documents, which in addition to other topics, also contain specifications and requirements for traffic control devices, including their use and placement, when performing work on State highways. These documents include Standard Plans, Standard Specifications, Standard Special Provisions, Proven Safety Countermeasure publications, California Manual for Setting Speed Limits, other manuals, Traffic Calming Guide, other guidelines, Flagging Instructions Handbook, other handbooks, pamphlets, bulletins (including Traffic Safety Bulletins) and memos (including Traffic Operation Policy Directives (TOPD)). In some cases, the specifications and requirements for traffic control devices contained in these publications, although in compliance with the minimum standards of the California MUTCD and the National MUTCD, can be more stringent (higher standard) than those shown in the California MUTCD and would be applicable to the projects on the State highway system. Refer to Section 1B.02 for more details.

CTCDC member comment: Suggest comparing with list of references used in previous sections to ensure consistency. Also consider adding hyperlinks to the references used.

Caltrans agrees with comment: Refer to responses on similar comments #5, #11, #12 and #13 for more details.

25. CTCDC Comment – Chapter 1D, Section 1D.02, Paragraph #12:

CA MUTCD 2026 Proposal includes

Local agencies responsible for the development or operation of bikeways or roadways where bicycle travel is permitted shall utilize all minimum safety design criteria and uniform specifications and symbols for signs, markers, and traffic control devices established by Caltrans. Refer to Streets and Highways Code 891.

CTCDC member comment: Reference to S&H Code Section 891 is used, this text doesn't match the text of current S&H Code Section 891. Review and revise text, as appropriate.

CA S&H Code Section 891 text

- (a) All city, county, regional, and other local agencies responsible for the development or operation of bikeways or roadways where bicycle travel is permitted shall utilize the minimum safety design criteria established pursuant to Section 890.6, except as provided in subdivision (b), and shall utilize the uniform specifications and symbols for signs, markers, and traffic control devices established pursuant to Section 890.8.
- (b) An agency may utilize minimum safety design criteria other than those established by Section 890.6 if all of the following conditions are met:
 - (1) The alternative criteria have been reviewed and approved by a qualified engineer with consideration for the unique characteristics and features of the proposed bikeway and surrounding environs.
 - (2) The alternative criteria, or the description of the project with reference to the alternative criteria, are adopted by resolution at a public meeting, after having provided proper notice of the public meeting and opportunity for public comment.
 - (3) The alternative criteria adhere to guidelines established by a national association of public agency transportation officials.

Caltrans agrees with comment and Paragraph 12 has been revised accordingly per below:

Standard:

- 12 **Except as provided in Paragraph #14 of this Section, local agencies responsible for the development or operation of bikeways or roadways where bicycle travel is permitted shall:**
 - A. **Utilize the minimum safety design criteria established by Caltrans for the planning and construction of bikeways and roadways where bicycle travel is permitted.**
 - B. **Also utilize the uniform specifications and symbols for signs, markers, and traffic**

control devices established by Caltrans to designate bikeways, regulate traffic, improve safety and convenience for bicyclists, and alert pedestrians and motorists of the presence of bicyclists on bikeways and on roadways where bicycle travel is permitted.

Support:

- 13 Refer to Streets and Highways Code 890.4, 890.6, 890.8 and 891.

Option:

- 14 Local agencies may utilize minimum safety design criteria other than those established by Caltrans (Refer to Streets and Highways Code Sections 890.6 and 891), if all of the following conditions are met:
- A. The alternative criteria have been reviewed and approved by a qualified engineer with consideration for the unique characteristics and features of the proposed bikeway and surrounding environs.
 - B. The alternative criteria, or the description of the project with reference to the alternative criteria, are adopted by resolution at a public meeting, after having provided proper notice of the public meeting and opportunity for public comment.
 - C. The alternative criteria adhere to guidelines established by a national association of public agency transportation officials.

26. New Text added by Caltrans – Chapter 1D, Section 1D.04, Paragraph #01a:

Caltrans added new text: Traffic control devices shall comply with the provisions of CVC Section 21466.5 for light brilliance so as not to impair the vision of drivers. to address CVC requirements for light brilliance levels.

Caltrans staff had shared the details of the CTCDC February 6, 2025, meeting discussions with the members of the SME WG on Part 1. 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 1, 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 1 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 1A Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment B – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 1B Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment C – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 1B Draft \(Figure\)](#)

[Attachment D – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 1B Draft \(Table Mark-ups\)](#)

[Attachment E – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 1C Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment F – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 1D Draft \(Text\)](#)

[Attachment G – CA MUTCD 2026 Chapter 1D Draft \(Table Mark-ups\)](#)