

Meeting Date: September 4, 2025 Item Number: 25-10	From: Michael Robinson & Patrick Leung, Caltrans
Sponsored By: Amjad Obeid, Caltrans	Presented By: Michael Robinson, Caltrans & Johnny Bhullar, Caltrans
Description: Request for review and recommendation to finalize CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 titled "Highway Traffic Signals" draft documents as part of 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.	

Recommendation:

Motion by committee, recommending Caltrans to finalize and prepare the CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 titled "Highway Traffic Signals" 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:

Michael Robinson & 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).

Code of Federal Regulation for "Traffic Control Devices on Federal-Aid and Other Streets and Highways" which includes the MUTCD, Part 655, Subpart F is available at: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-23/chapter-I/subchapter-G/part-655/subpart-F>

The Federal Register notice on "National Standards for Traffic Control Devices; the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways; Revision" can be viewed at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2023-27178>

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
- 23 CFR Part 655, Subpart F, which includes:
 - National MUTCD as the national standard
 - State MUTCDs and substantial conformance requirements
 - Supplemental documents conformance requirements
 - Dates and deadline for compliance
 - Compliance of existing devices and in construction projects
- California's review and adoption process, including:
 - Timelines and schedules
 - Subject Matter Experts Workgroup member reviews
 - Public review and process for submitting comments
 - CTCDC agenda items, meetings, and meeting minutes
 - Submitting comments directly on the webpage
 - Downloadable forms for submitting comments
 - Contact information for CA MUTCD Team
- CA MUTCD 2026 development, including:
 - Draft documents of the individual parts
 - Chapter content files for text, figures and tables
 - Compare documents with markups
 - Phase specific versions of chapter contents
 - Status of individual parts and progress towards finalization

Caltrans began the process to review National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition) for adoption in California in January of 2024 by soliciting CA MUTCD practitioners statewide to form Subject Matter Expert (SME) Workgroups based on the individual parts and topics included in the MUTCD. These SME Workgroups were led by the individual topic owners, who have knowledge, expertise, and statewide responsibility on these specific topics of the CA MUTCD.

The SME Workgroup members reviewed their respective CA MUTCD topics in their weekly/bi-weekly meetings and discussions. SME Workgroup members also conducted individual reviews and provided comments and resolutions to other comments in shared documents.

This review conducted by CA MUTCD topic owners and SME Workgroup members for each individual part, included:

1. **Comparing the new National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition) revised text contents** with the current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 text contents (which are based on National MUTCD 2009 (10th Edition)), with the primary focus being on changes to Standard and Guidance statements. In order to meet the required 2-year timeline schedule, these text reviews included only changes to some Option statements, not all changes to the Option statements. The purpose of reviewing changes to text contents was to assess potential conflicts with state law, current policy and/or current practice and potential impacts of adopting these changes for California agencies. Reason for limiting focus on Option statement changes was, that they are permissive conditions and do not carry any requirements or recommendations. Support statement changes were ignored, since they are informational and do not convey any degree of mandate, recommendation, authorization, prohibition, or enforceable condition.
2. **Comparing the new National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition) figures and tables** with the respective and relevant current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 figures and tables (which were based on National MUTCD 2009 (10th Edition)). The purpose of comparing the figures and tables was to identify newly added figures and tables, changes to current figures and tables, and deleted figures and tables, and assess any potential impacts of adopting these changes for California agencies.
3. **Review of the current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 text contents**, with primary focus on California specific text additions ([shown in blue color text and blue margin lines](#)) and California specific text revisions of the National MUTCD 2009 (10th Edition) text, which are [shown as black strikethrough text and blue margin line](#) in current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9. The purpose of this review was to identify duplicate, similar or conflicting text and eliminate redundancies. Another purpose was to assess and reevaluate these revisions of the National MUTCD, many of which were allowed (grand-fathered) during the initial adoption of the national MUTCD in 2004. The need to retain any of these California specific [text additions](#) or [text revisions](#) reflected in CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 was evaluated before including them in the CA MUTCD 2026 version. For any additions and revisions that were being retained, ensured purpose served, and they being in substantial conformance with the National MUTCD 2023. This additional review was performed to improve consistency and clarity and help practitioners understand the use and applicability of the manual, while promoting uniformity in its' application.

Pursuant to these meeting reviews and discussions, SME Workgroup members provided comments and recommendations to Caltrans. Caltrans topic owners reviewed these comments and recommendations, conducted follow up activities to provide resolutions and dispositions.

These draft document contents developed for the individual chapters of CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 titled “Highway Traffic Signals” are based on the SME WG member's reviews and recommendations, and include resolutions and dispositions of their provided comments, concerns and recommendations. These Part 4 draft documents are prepared by Caltrans to revise current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9, and to develop CA MUTCD 2026 version, to ensure CA MUTCD will be in substantial conformance with FHWA's National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition).

All CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 draft documents, which include individual chapters as separate files, with the individual chapters further separated into text, and for figure, and table contents, only if applicable, are being provided in this agenda item as attachments. Refer to Attachments #1 thru #35.

They are being made open to public for formal review and comments, to fulfill Caltrans' obligation to consult with local agencies and conducting public hearings, in compliance with California Vehicle Code (CVC) 21400 provisions. All of these Part 4 chapters, as attachments, began to be posted, as they were prepared, beginning July 11, 2025 (to allow longer public review period) on California's National MUTCD 2023 review and adoption efforts web page available at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/camutcd/nmutcd>

This CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 final draft combines the National MUTCD 2023 and current California MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 (effective April 1, 2025) documents. Though every effort has been made by Caltrans to ensure accuracy of this document, the inherent variances between National MUTCD and California MUTCD, along with moving of contents and reorganization undertaken by FHWA in the National MUTCD 2023, there may be unintentional errors or omissions in this document, or some contents may have been overlooked.

The official versions of the National MUTCD 2023 and California MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 are available on the following websites:

- National MUTCD 2023 - <https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/>
- California MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 - <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/camutcd>

CA MUTCD 2026 draft version being developed, uses the current California MUTCD format, which is similar to the National MUTCD format. It incorporates National MUTCD in its entirety and explicitly shows which portions thereof are applicable or not applicable in California.

Format of the text, figure and table contents of CA MUTCD 2026 draft is as follows:

- **Unedited black text** - The unedited National MUTCD 2023 text is shown in “Times New Roman” font and black color
- ~~**Strikethrough black text**~~ - Text portions of the National MUTCD 2023 contents

that are not applicable in California are shown with a strikethrough of the black text and a blue margin line on the right side.

- **Blue text** - The California text additions, including new paragraphs, and enhancements are incorporated into the combined document at appropriate locations and shown in “Arial Narrow” font and blue color with a blue margin line on the right side.
- **California topics with no corresponding National MUTCD section** – Sections are given a number that begins with number 101 and increases in sequence, followed with a “(CA)” to indicate that this is a California created section.
- **Blue “X”** – Figures and Tables of the National MUTCD 2023 contents, in entirety or a portion there of, that are not applicable in California are shown with a Blue “X” and a blue margin line on the right side.

Compare documents of the changes in CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 chapters, from the current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9, are being prepared separately, permitting availability of staffing resources. The purpose of the compare documents is to share and highlight the changes, and for ease in reviewing and comparison. Changes shown in these compare documents includes changes to the current CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9 Part 4, and changes to the National MUTCD 2009 contents since they are incorporated within CA MUTCD 2014 Revision 9. The compare documents cover all text, figure and table contents, and include color highlights, markups and comments. These compare documents, due to their large sizes, are not included in this agenda item. The compare documents will be made available, once they are ready, and can be used, if needed as a reference. Compare documents, when ready, will be posted on the webpage: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/safety-programs/camutcd/nmutcd>

Caltrans has prepared the draft proposal on CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 for all individual chapters, and it is attached to this agenda item. It is being provided to the CTCDC members, and is also open to the public, for review and to provide comments to Caltrans.

Caltrans will review comments submitted on these Part 4 documents, including input and comments received from CTCDC members, meeting attendees and the public, during the CTCDC meeting discussions of this agenda item. Caltrans will revise this Part 4 draft proposal, based on the resolution and disposition of these comments, as needed and appropriate.

Based on **CTCDC recommendation to Caltrans**, Caltrans will either revise draft proposal and bring it back to the next CTCDC meeting, or prepare it for finalization, if and as, needed.

Pursuant to **Caltrans receiving formal CTCDC recommendation** to finalize CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4, it will be revised as per the CTCDC passing motion details.

Caltrans will submit the revised proposal to FHWA CA Division for review and determination of “substantial conformance” finding with the National MUTCD 2023 (11th Edition). Caltrans will review and address any comments FHWA CA Division provides, as part of their “substantial conformance” review and findings, to ensure “substantial conformance” with the National MUTCD 2023.

Upon receiving FHWA CA Division’s informal finding and determination on Part 4 draft proposal to be in “substantial conformance”, these Part 4 documents will be finalized and prepared for inclusion into CA MUTCD 2026.

Caltrans will issue the entire CA MUTCD 2026 in a single action, once all other parts have been prepared and finalized on or before the January 18, 2026, deadline. Caltrans will not issue any parts individually, even if any part has been finalized and is ready for inclusion in CA MUTCD 2026.

Attachments:

Due to the number of individual chapters in CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4, and each chapter further separated for text, figure and table contents, to facilitate review and allow for ease in referencing these attachments, instead of providing them in the listing format, they are being provided in the tabular format.

CA MUTCD 2026 Part 4 Attachments

Ch. #	Chapter Title Description	Attachment #s		
		Text	Figure	Table
4A	General	1	NA	NA
4B	Traffic Control Signals - General	2	NA	NA
4C	Traffic Control Signal Needs Studies	3	4	5
4D	Design Features of Traffic Control Signals	6	7	8
4E	Traffic Control Signal Indications	9	10	NA
4F	Steady (Stop-And-Go) Operation of Traffic Control Signals	11	12	NA
4G	Flashing Operation of Traffic Control Signals	13	NA	NA
4H	Bicycle Signals	14	15	15A
4I	Pedestrian Control Features	16	17	NA
4J	Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons	18	19	NA
4K	Accessible Pedestrian Signals and Detectors	20	NA	NA
4L	Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons	21	22	NA
4M	Traffic Control Signals for Emergency Vehicle Access	23	NA	NA
4N	Hybrid Beacons for Emergency Vehicle Access	24	25	NA
4O	Traffic Control Signal for One-Lane, Two-Way Facilities	26	NA	NA
4P	Traffic Control Signals for Freeway Entrance Ramps	27	NA	NA
4Q	Traffic Control for Movable Bridges	28	NA	NA
4R	Highway Traffic Signals at Toll Plazas	29	NA	NA
4S	Flashing Beacons	30	31	NA
4T	Lane-Use Control Signals	32	33	NA
4U	In-Roadway Warning Lights	34	35	NA