



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

Chair's Message

MESSAGE 2025-#5
November 10, 2025

Gene Hawkins
NCUTCD Chair

Well, those eight years went by really fast. This should be my last Chair's Message. In this last message, I want to share some information about the upcoming Annual Meeting, the future, and a look back at the past.

2025 Fall Review Cycle

On July 21, 2025, Richard distributed 11 proposed changes to our sponsoring organizations for review and comment. The lower number of items reflects the limits I placed on technical committees and joint task forces to improve the review process and time limits during the 2026 Annual Meeting. Comments were due to Richard by October 3 and are now posted on our [website](#).

- 25B-RW-01: Lane Reduction Signing
- 25B-GMI-01: Removal of "Shall Be / Shall Not Be Permitted" Statements
- 25B-MKG-01: Lane Reduction Markings
- 25B-SIG-01: Traffic Control Signals at Midblock Pedestrian Crosswalks
- 25B-TTC-01: Blasting Zones
- 25B-TTC-02: Miscellaneous TTC Zone Signs
- 25B-RR-01: Removal of Defined Length and Width of Retroreflective Strip
- 25B-RR-02: LRT Signal Indications
- 25B-BIK-01: Smaller Sized Regulatory Signs for Separated Bikeways
- 25B-CAV-01: Dotted Edge Line Consistency Between Parts 3 and 5
- 25B-PED-01: Definitions of Pedestrian and Wheelchair

Several of these proposed changes are likely to be presented to Council during the upcoming Annual Meeting.

Deadlines Are Important

During the last review cycle, Richard received several emails asking for comments to be added to the posted comments on our website after the deadline. It is worth reminding our members and sponsoring organizations that our schedule leaves no room for lollygagging between our meetings. The processing of comments from our sponsoring organizations and subsequent posting on our website is a time-consuming process. When individuals or sponsoring organizations do not submit comments to us by the deadline, we are not able to repeat the processing effort to add them to the posted comments at a later date. Our deadline for submitting comments is a "make it or break it" deadline. If an individual's comments are not provided to us by the sponsoring organization on or before the deadline, they will not be included in the compilation of comments on our website. Please keep this in mind for future review cycles.

2026 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is less than two months away. The early registration deadline is November 30. The early registration deadline is November 30. The deadline for making hotel reservations is December 17. Due to demand, the NCUTCD block has been expanded by the Doubletree, but may be close to being completely filled, if it isn't already. Once the hotel block fills, you may be paying a higher rate for an available room, or miss out on rooms entirely.

Our upcoming meeting will be a busy one. The Thursday General Session will be especially jam-packed. After starting the Thursday General Session, we will welcome our newest members

and hand out NCUTCD pins to them. If you are one of our new members, be sure to attend Thursday morning. Assuming the federal government shutdown does not impact FHWA attendance at the meeting, we will hear a report from FHWA with a short Q&A after. We will hold the election before the mid-morning break. Details are in the next section. After the break, we may hear from the incoming chair, receive our typical reports, and I will make some farewell comments. The schedule for Thursday morning is such that I do not expect any proposed changes to be presented to Council. If any are presented, I expect that there will be no more than one or two. Depending upon how many of the eleven items that went to sponsors are ready to present to Council, combined with others left over from previous meetings (which is over twenty items), the Friday General Session could last into the afternoon.

Members will notice a new feature at the upcoming meeting. As mentioned in the last Chair's Message, the Executive Board created opportunities for organizations to provide financial support of our Annual and Midyear Meetings. Several organizations stepped up and made the commitment to do so in January and you will see the names of those organizations in various places during the meeting. We greatly appreciate the support of these organizations! [Operating Procedure VII-D](#) identifies the different support packages if your organization is interested in helping support the Midyear Meeting in June.

2026 Election

The election in January is a significant one as the NCUTCD will be electing its fifth chair. No petitions were received, so the final slate of candidates for all of the offices will be as listed below. As part of the election process, the candidates for Chair will have five minutes each to make comments to Council. Voting will be by written ballot. Richard is preparing the ballots so that each candidate for Chair is listed first on half of the ballots. The votes will be tallied by the Tellers Committee, which is comprised of Honorary Members. Those elected will assume office immediately upon adjournment of the meeting on Friday.

- **Chair:** Neil Boudreau, Jonathan Upchurch
- **Vice-Chair:** Bill Lambert
- **Research Chair:** Bryan Katz
- **Treasurer:** Monica Suter

2025 Midyear Meeting Recommended Changes

The 18 recommended changes approved during the 2025 Midyear Meeting in Des Moines have been posted on our [website](#) and have been submitted to FHWA for consideration. For anyone that is counting, we have submitted 51 recommended changes to FHWA on the 11th edition MUTCD.

2026 Spring Review Cycle

The limit of one proposed change for each technical committee or joint task force remains in place for the spring review cycle. As such, I would expect that somewhere around a dozen items will be distributed to sponsoring organizations for review and comment in the spring. As a reminder, only sponsoring organizations can submit comments. A few NCUTCD members have tried to submit comments directly to Richard in recent cycles. Our process requires that comments come from the sponsoring organizations and Richard cannot accept comments directly from members unless they are submitting them on behalf of and instead of the sponsoring organization.

The limit on the number of proposed changes distributed to sponsoring organizations worked well in the fall review cycle. It appears that with fewer items to review, the reviewers provided more thorough review comments. This is a feature, not a bug, and underscores the value of the sponsor review effort in our consensus developing process.

Current NCUTCD Leadership

There have been no changes in NCUTCD leadership over the last few months. Our leaders are listed below.

Type	Unit	Chair	Vice-Chair	Secretary
Technical Committee	RW Signs	Erika Lindeberg	James Sullivan	Bob Seyfried
	GMI Signs	Jason Hyatt	Ryan Hoyt	Heather Schmidt Roxane Mukai
	Markings	Paul Carlson	Jody Colvin	Tom Grant James Kratz
	Signals	John Hibbard	Matt Duncan	Dee Taylor
	TTC	Neil Boudreau	Ryan Lancaster	Adam Leigh Marc Lipschultz
	Railroad	John Dinning	JoNette Kuhnau	Nicole Jackson
	Bicycles	Rock Miller	Christy Staudt	Stewart Robertson
Joint Committee	Research	Bryan Katz	Neal Hawkins	Mike Tantillo
	Edit	Bill Lambert	Scott Wainwright	Jonathan Upchurch
Joint Task Force	CAV	Roxane Mukai	Amanda Hamm	Melodie El-Zine
	Pedestrians	Randy McCourt	Lee Austin	Amanda Purcell
	Roundabouts	Scott Zehngraft	Brian Walsh	Anna Mermelstein Tyrel Murfitt
	Rules of the Road	Ronnie Bell	Robert Saylor	Mark Nagra
Admin	NCUTCD	Gene Hawkins*	Bill Lambert	Richard Moeur

* A new Chair will be elected in January and will take office at the end of the Annual Meeting.

Parting Thoughts

The meeting in January will be my last as Chair. I recently looked back at the document that I distributed prior to the 2018 NCUTCD election. That document included my "[10 Thoughts](#)" which I later boiled down to four emphasis areas during my early tenure as NCUTCD Chair. Those four emphasis areas were:

- Improve NCUTCD communications.
- Promote MUTCD improvement.
- Speed up the NCUTCD process to be more responsive (earlier deadlines).
- Create opportunity for more individuals and organizations to participate in the NCUTCD process.

I dare say that I think the NCUTCD has been successful in all four of these areas. We have grown a lot as an organization over the last eight years. Below are some of the major accomplishments of our organization since I became the Chair (listed in no particular order):

- **NPA comment process:** Above everything else we have done in the last eight years; I am most proud of our NPA docket response effort in the spring of 2021. We faced a daunting task, trying to prepare docket comments on the new draft MUTCD while most of the country was still operating under pandemic restrictions. We did well.
- **Overcame Pandemic Challenges:** Due to the COVID pandemic, we had to change three of our meetings to a virtual environment (2021 Annual, 2020 and 2021 Midyears). While these meetings were not as effective as a face-to-face meeting environment, they gave us valuable experience that prepared us to deal with the MUTCD NPA in a virtual world.
- **Advancement:** When I began as Chair in 2018, I often joked that I was trying to move the NCUTCD into the 21st century. While joking, there was an element of truth in that statement. We have modernized many of our processes to better reflect a 21st century organization. While some may complain that we move with the speed of a 20th century

process, that is an intentional focus that contributes to our consensus-building process. And we are much faster and streamlined than we used to be.

- **IT:** We moved administration activities to an online environment, including advancements in our website, member database, and file storage.
- **Executive Secretary:** The Executive Board selected Richard Moeur to be Executive Secretary after Bob Garrett retired in February 2020.
- **Executive Board:** The Board began meeting four times per year in 2023 instead of the two meetings per year in prior years.
- **Chair's Message:** In an effort to keep members informed of recent and upcoming activities, I created the Chair's Message. This message is my 37th Chair's Message.
- **New Sponsoring Organizations:** We approved NACTO and ITS America as sponsoring organizations during the 2020 Annual Meeting.
- **Updated BOP:** We completed a major, multi-year rewrite of Bylaws and Operating Procedures during the 2024 Annual Meeting. A significant feature of this overhaul is the formalization of the joint task force structure, allowing JTFs to develop proposed changes.
- **Leadership:** We have seen changes in every leadership position during my tenure except for Vice-Chair and Research Chair, which came to office at the same time that I did.
- **Growth:** The NCUTCD has grown. Looking at the database, about 45 percent of our members attended their first meeting during my tenure as Chair, and 55 percent in the last decade. The NCUTCD is significantly different than it was eight years ago.

After eight years of serving as your Chair, I am looking forward to stepping away from the responsibilities. Four years ago, I retired from my full-time job as a Professor at Texas A&M (Gig 'Em Aggies!). Since then, I have been providing expert witness services through Kittelson LLC. Last summer, I stopped taking new cases. I'm slowly finishing the cases I have on the books and hope that I will be fully retired within four or five years, maybe sooner. As my access to free time has increased, I have found that the old statement that people are busier in retirement is true. I seem to have something going on all the time. I'll be able to devote more time to my passions, including: cowboy action shooting, coaching/helping Little League, church, hunting, fishing on the Texas coast, and dealing with a lot of projects that have accumulated over the years. If I can figure out how to create a website, I hope to try and preserve some of my traffic control device knowledge by documenting some MUTCD history and related TCD items. Now that I'm free of leadership responsibilities, I feel that I have greater freedom to express my opinions. I will continue to attend NCUTCD meetings, although I hope to spend most of my time in the back of a room with a big smile on a mouth that stays shut. After over 30 years as a member of the NCUTCD, I have many good friends in the NCUTCD that I hope to continue to share time with.

My Christian faith is a foundational part of who I am. During my time as Chair, I have tried to treat everyone with kindness and fairness. I hope that if, at some point during my tenure, I told you to go to hell, I did it in a way that made you look forward to the trip. I have had to make some decisions as Chair that did not appeal to all of our members. I've tried to make every decision in the best interest of the NCUTCD and the MUTCD.

As a final comment, I want to thank my wife, Kathe, for her support over the last eight years. As the intensity of my Chair activities increased, Kathe realized that traveling with me to NCUTCD was not like it was before I became Chair because I was busy from dawn to dusk, leaving little time for fun with her. It is time for us to do the things we enjoy together, including sitting in our backyard talking (yes, sometimes I'm talking about the NCUTCD), time at our second home on the Texas coast, more visits to our son and daughter-in-law that live five hours away, and doing more with our three grandkids that live in College Station. I pray that I have many more happy years of enjoyment with Kathe and our family. My thanks to everyone for their support over the years. The NCUTCD is a better organization than it was eight years ago because of your contributions.