National Committee on
Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD)
Recommended Changes to Proposed Text for 11th Edition of the MUTCD
Docket Number: FHWA-2020-0001

Federal Register Item Number: 425-427 (see listing below)
NPA MUTCD Section Number: Chapter 4J
Legend: Base text shown in proposal is the NPA "clean" proposed text.

- NCUTCD recommendation for text to be added in final rule.
- ~~NCUTCD recommendation for text to be deleted in final rule~~.
- NCUTCD recommendation for text to be moved/relocated in final rule.
- NPA text that was not previously approved by NCUTCD but is now approved.
- Explanatory note: [Note that explains purpose of recommended change.]

The following pages present NCUTCD recommendations for changes to the MUTCD NPA proposed text, tables, and figures for Chapter 4J. Below is a short summary of the NCUTCD position for each section of this chapter. A more detailed summary is provided at the beginning of each section.

- NPA #425, Section 4J.01: NCUTCD agrees with NPA content.
- NPA #426, Section 4J.02: NCUTCD agrees with NPA content.
- NPA #427, Section 4J.03: NCUTCD agrees with NPA content.

Section 4J.01 Comments: NCUTCD agrees with 4J.01 as presented in the NPA.

Section 4J.01 Application of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons

Support:

A pedestrian hybrid beacon is a special type of hybrid beacon used to warn and control traffic at an unsignalized location to assist pedestrians in crossing a street or highway at a marked crosswalk.

Option:

A pedestrian hybrid beacon may be considered for installation to facilitate pedestrian crossings at a location that does not meet traffic signal warrants (see Chapter 4C), or at a location that meets traffic signal warrants under Sections 4C.05 and/or 4C.06 but a decision is made to not install a traffic control signal.

Standard:

If used, pedestrian hybrid beacons shall be used in conjunction with signs and pavement markings to warn and control traffic at locations where pedestrians enter or cross a street or highway. A pedestrian hybrid beacon shall only be installed at a marked crosswalk.

Guidance:

If one of the signal warrants of Chapter 4C is met and a traffic control signal is justified by an engineering study, and if a decision is made to install a traffic control signal, it should be installed based upon the provisions of Chapters 4D through 4I and 4K.

If a traffic control signal is not justified under the signal warrants of Chapter 4C and if gaps in traffic are not adequate to permit pedestrians to cross, or if the speed for vehicles approaching on the major street is too high to permit pedestrians to cross, or if pedestrian delay is excessive, the need for a pedestrian hybrid beacon should be considered on the basis of an engineering study that considers major-street volumes, speeds, widths, and gaps in conjunction with pedestrian volumes, walking speeds, and delay.

For a major street where the posted or statutory speed limit or the 85th-percentile speed is 35 mph or less, the need for a pedestrian hybrid beacon should be considered if the engineering study finds that the plotted point representing the vehicles per hour on the major street (total of both approaches) and the corresponding total of all pedestrians crossing the major street for 1 hour (any four consecutive 15-minute periods) of an average day falls above the applicable curve in Figure 4J-1 for the length of the crosswalk.

For a major street where the posted or statutory speed limit or the 85th-percentile speed exceeds 35 mph, the need for a pedestrian hybrid beacon should be considered if the engineering study finds that the plotted point representing the vehicles per hour on the major street (total of both approaches) and the corresponding total of all pedestrians crossing the major street for 1 hour (any four consecutive 15-minute periods) of an average day falls above the applicable curve in Figure 4J-2 for the length of the crosswalk.

For crosswalks that have lengths other than the four that are specifically shown in Figures 4J-1 and 4J-2, the values should be interpolated between the curves.

Figure 4J-1 Comments: NCUTCD agrees with Figure 4J-1 as presented in the NPA.

Figure 4J-1. Guidelines for the Installation of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons on Low-Speed Roadways

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Figure 4J-2 Comments: NCUTCD agrees with Figure 4J-2 as presented in the NPA.

Figure 4J-2. Guidelines for the Installation of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons on High-Speed Roadways

Option:

The criteria for the pedestrian volume crossing the major street shown in Figures 4J-1 and 4J-2 may be reduced as much as 50 percent if the 15th-percentile crossing speed of pedestrians is less than 3.5 feet per second.

Where there is a divided street having a median of sufficient width for pedestrians to wait, the criteria for the major-street traffic volume shown in Figures 4J-1 and 4J-2 may be applied separately to each direction of vehicular traffic.

Section 4J.02 Comments: NCUTCD agrees with 4J.02 as presented in the NPA.

Section 4J.02 Design of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons

Standard:

Except as otherwise provided in this Section, a pedestrian hybrid beacon shall meet the provisions of Chapters 4D through 4G, 4I, and 4J.

A pedestrian hybrid beacon face shall consist of three signal sections, with a CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indication centered below two horizontally aligned CIRCULAR RED signal indications (see Figure 4J-3).

When an engineering study finds that installation of a pedestrian hybrid beacon is justified, then:

A. At least two pedestrian hybrid beacon faces shall be installed for each approach of the major street,
B. A stop line shall be installed for each approach to the crosswalk,
C. A pedestrian signal head complying with the provisions set forth in Chapter 4I shall be installed at each end of the marked crosswalk,
D. The pedestrian hybrid beacon shall be pedestrian actuated, and
E. If the pedestrian hybrid beacon is installed at or immediately adjacent to an intersection with a minor street, a STOP sign shall be installed for each minor-street approach.

Figure 4J-3 Comments: NCUTCD agrees with Figure 4J-3 as presented in the NPA.

Figure 4J-3. Sequence for a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon

Guidance:

When an engineering study finds that installation of a pedestrian hybrid beacon is justified, then:

A. Parking and other sight obstructions should be prohibited for at least 100 feet in advance of and at least 20 feet beyond the marked crosswalk, or site accommodations should be made through curb extensions or other techniques to provide adequate sight distance, and
B. If installed within a signal system, the pedestrian hybrid beacon should be coordinated.

On approaches having posted or statutory speed limits or 85th-percentile speeds in excess of 35 mph and on approaches having traffic or operating conditions that would tend to obscure visibility of roadside hybrid beacon face locations, both of the minimum of two pedestrian hybrid beacon faces should be installed over the roadway.

On multi-lane approaches having posted or statutory speed limits or 85th-percentile speeds of 35 mph or less, either a pedestrian hybrid beacon face should be installed on each side of the approach (if a median of sufficient width exists) or at least one of the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces should be installed over the roadway.

A pedestrian hybrid beacon should comply with the signal face location provisions described in Sections 4D.04 through 4D.09.

Accessible pedestrian signals should be installed in conjunction with a pedestrian hybrid beacon.

Option:

A CROSSWALK STOP ON RED (symbolic circular red) (R10-23) sign or a STOP ON RED—PROCEED ON FLASHING RED WHEN CLEAR (R10-23a) sign (see Section 2B.63) may be installed facing each major street approach.

Option:

A Pedestrian (W11-2) warning sign (see Section 2C.55) with an AHEAD (W16-9P) supplemental plaque may be placed in advance of a pedestrian hybrid beacon. A warning beacon may be installed to supplement the W11-2 sign.

Guidance:

If a warning beacon supplements a W11-2 sign in advance of a pedestrian hybrid beacon, it should be programmed to flash only when the pedestrian hybrid beacon is not in the dark mode.

Standard:

If a warning beacon is installed to supplement the W11-2 sign, the design and location of the warning beacon shall comply with the provisions of Sections 4S.01 and 4S.03.

Bicycle signal faces (see Chapter 4H) shall not be used at a pedestrian hybrid beacon.

Section 4J.03 Comments: NCUTCD agrees with 4J.03 as presented in the NPA.

Section 4J.03 Operation of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons

Standard:

Pedestrian hybrid beacon indications shall be dark (not illuminated) during periods between actuations.

Following an actuation by a pedestrian, a pedestrian hybrid beacon face shall display a flashing CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indication, followed by a steady CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indication, followed by both steady CIRCULAR RED signal indications during the pedestrian walk interval, followed by alternating flashing CIRCULAR RED signal indications during the pedestrian change interval (see Figure 4J-3). Upon termination of the pedestrian change interval, the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces shall revert to a dark (not illuminated) condition.

Except as provided in Paragraph 4, the pedestrian signal heads shall continue to display a steady UPRAISED HAND (symbolizing DONT WALK) signal indication when the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces are either dark or displaying flashing or steady CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indications. The pedestrian signal heads shall display a WALKING PERSON (symbolizing WALK) signal indication when the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces are displaying steady CIRCULAR RED signal indications. The pedestrian signal heads shall display a flashing UPRAISED HAND (symbolizing DONT WALK) signal indication when the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces are displaying alternating flashing CIRCULAR RED signal indications. Upon termination of the pedestrian change interval, the pedestrian signal heads shall revert to a steady UPRAISED HAND (symbolizing DONT WALK) signal indication.

Option:

Where the pedestrian hybrid beacon is installed adjacent to a roundabout to facilitate crossings by pedestrians with visual disabilities and an engineering study determines that pedestrians without visual disabilities can be allowed to cross the roadway without actuating the pedestrian hybrid beacon, the pedestrian signal heads may be dark (not illuminated) when the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces are dark.

Guidance:

The duration of the flashing yellow interval should be determined by engineering judgment.

If the pedestrian hybrid beacon is coordinated as a part of a signal system:

A. The duration of the flashing yellow interval should not vary on a cycle-by-cycle basis.

B. The pedestrian hybrid beacon should remain in the dark condition after a pedestrian actuation has been received until the point in the background cycle when the predetermined duration of the flashing yellow interval needs to be initiated in order to achieve the appropriate coordinated offset.

Option:

If a minimum dark time between activations of the pedestrian hybrid beacon has been set on the controller, the pedestrian hybrid beacon may remain in the dark condition after a pedestrian actuation has been received until the minimum dark time has been provided.

Standard:

The duration of the steady yellow change interval shall be determined using engineering practices in accordance with the provisions in Section 4F.17.

Guidance:

A yellow change interval should have a minimum duration of 3 seconds and a maximum duration of 6 seconds (see Section 4F.17). The longer intervals should be reserved for use on approaches with higher speeds.

Option:

A steady red clearance interval may be used after the steady yellow change interval.

The alternating flashing CIRCULAR RED signal indications may continue to flash for a short period after the pedestrian change interval has terminated to provide a buffer interval for pedestrians.

A pedestrian hybrid beacon that is located in close proximity to an active grade crossing may be preempted in accordance with the applicable provisions in Sections 4F.19 and 8D.09.

Standard:

If a pedestrian hybrid beacon is placed into a flashing mode by a conflict monitor (malfunction management unit) or by a manual switch, the pedestrian hybrid beacon faces shall display flashing CIRCULAR YELLOW signal indications to each approach of the major street and the pedestrian signal heads shall revert to a dark (not illuminated) condition.