



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

13236 North 7th Street, Suite 4-259, Phoenix, Arizona 85022
Phone/Text: 231-4-NCUTCD (231-462-8823)
E-mail: secretary@ncutcd.org Website: <https://ncutcd.org>

Item No.: 24B-ROR-01

NCUTCD PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO THE NCUTCD RULES OF THE ROAD

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Rules of the Road Joint Task Force
ITEM NUMBER: 24B-ROR-01
TOPIC: Rules of the Road Definition Revisions
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: Rules of the Road Joint Task Force
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF RULES OF THE ROAD: Chapter 1 - Definitions

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by Joint Task Force: 07/25/2024
Approved by NCUTCD Council:

This is a proposal for changes to the definitions included in the NCUTCD Rules of the Road (ROR) that has been developed by the NCUTCD Rules of the Road Joint Task Force. The NCUTCD is distributing this to its sponsoring organizations for review and comment. Sponsor comments will be considered in revising the proposal prior to NCUTCD Council consideration. This proposal does not represent a revision of the NCUTCD Rules of the Road unless and until approved by the NCUTCD Council.

SUMMARY:

At the 2022 Annual Meeting, the NC Council approved item 21B-ROR-04 regarding definitions for the NCUTCD Rules of the Road. That item updated the ROR definitions to, in most cases, match the definitions in the NCUTCD NPA Docket Comments. This proposal is to revise the definitions previously approved based on the MUTCD 11th Edition definitions and other ROR JTF work.

DISCUSSION:

The Rules of the Road Joint Task Force (ROR JTF) has reviewed the definitions included in the MUTCD 11th Edition and is proposing to make revisions in many cases where the 11th Edition definition varies from the current ROR definition. There are also some definitions in the 11th Edition not currently included in the ROR definitions that are proposed to be added. Typically, a definition is not being proposed for addition unless that term is used in another definition or in the ROR text. There are also a few definition revisions proposed by the ROR JTF that are independent of the 11th Edition definitions.

34 **RECOMMENDED RULES OF THE ROAD CHANGES:**

35 The following present the proposed changes to the current NCUTCD ROR within the context of
36 the ROR language. Proposed additions to the ROR are shown in blue underline and proposed
37 deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red-strikethrough~~. In some cases, background
38 comments may be provided with the ROR text. These comments are indicated by [bracketed
39 white text in shaded green]. Deletions made by a technical committee or task force after initial
40 distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in ~~highlighted red-strikethrough and Helvetica~~
41 ~~text~~. Additions made by a technical committee or task force after initial distribution to sponsoring
42 organizations are shown in underline blue and Helvetica text.

43
44 [Note: The definitions have been renumbered as needed to be sequential. Color coding is not
45 used to show any changes in the definition numbers themselves other than for new definitions
46 which are in blue underline.]

47
48 **CHAPTER 1 - DEFINITIONS**

49
50 The following words and phrases when used in this code shall, for the purpose of this code, have the
51 meanings respectively ascribed to them in this chapter, except when the context otherwise requires
52 interpretation.

- 53
- 54 1. Agency - an organization with the responsibility for providing, maintaining, and/or operating a
55 public or private road system.
 - 56
 - 57 2. Alcohol - any substance or substances containing any form of alcohol.
 - 58
 - 59 3. Alley - A street or highway intended to provide access to the rear or side of lots or buildings in urban
60 districts and not intended for the purpose of through vehicular traffic.
 - 61
 - 62 4. Arterial Highway (Street) - a general term denoting a highway primarily used by through traffic,
63 usually on a continuous route or a highway designated as part of an arterial system.
 - 64
 - 65 5. Authorized emergency vehicle - Such fire department vehicles, police vehicles and ambulances as
66 are publicly owned, and such other publicly or privately owned vehicles as are designated by the
67 commissioner of motor vehicles (or other appropriate state official).
 - 68
 - 69 6. Bicycle - a pedal-powered vehicle upon which the human operator sits.
 - 70
 - 71 7. Bus - A self-propelled rubber tired vehicle designed to carry a substantial number of passengers
72 commonly operated on streets and highways.
 - 73
 - 74 8. Business district - The territory contiguous to and including a highway when within any 600 feet
75 along such highway there are buildings in use for business or industrial purposes, including but not
76 limited to hotels, banks, or office buildings, railroad stations and public buildings which occupy at
77 least 300 feet of frontage on one side or 300 feet collectively on both sides of the highway.
 - 78
 - 79 9. Commissioner - The commissioner of motor vehicles of this State. Note: If the term "commissioner"
80 is not appropriate in a particular state, then the appropriate term and definition should be substituted.
 - 81
 - 82 10. Controlled-access highway - Every highway, street or roadway in respect to which owners or
83 occupants of abutting land and other persons have no legal right of access to or from the same except

84 at such points only and in such manner as may be determined by the public authority having
85 jurisdiction over such highway, street or roadway.

86
87 11. Crosswalk –

- 88 (a) That part of a roadway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of
89 the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs or, in the absence of
90 curbs, from the edges of the traversable roadway; and in the absence of a sidewalk on one side
91 of the roadway, the part of a roadway included within the extension of the lateral lines of the
92 sidewalk at right angles to the center line.
93 (b) Any portion of a roadway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated as a pedestrian
94 crossing by pavement marking lines on the surface, which might be supplemented by
95 contrasting pavement texture, style, or color.

96
97 12. Department - The department of motor vehicles of this State.

98
99 13. Divided highway - A highway divided into two or more roadways by leaving an intervening space or
100 by a physical barrier or by clearly indicated dividing section so constructed as to impede vehicular
101 traffic.

102
103 14. Drive - To operate or be in physical control of a vehicle.

104
105 15. Driven - To have operated or been in physical control of a vehicle.

106
107 16. Driver - Every person who drives or is in actual physical control of a vehicle.

108
109 17. Driving - Operating or being in physical control of a vehicle.

110
111 18. Driveway- an access from a roadway to a building, site, or abutting property.

112
113 19. Driving Aisle - circulation area for motor vehicles within a parking area, typically between rows of
114 parking spaces. Driving aisles provide one-way or two-way travel. ~~Driving aisles are exempted from~~
115 ~~compliance with MUTCD provisions.~~ [Add the 11th Edition definition but omit the last sentence
116 since this is the ROR rather than the MUTCD.]

117
118 20. Drug - A controlled substance as defined by State or federal law or any other drug or psychoactive
119 substance capable of impairing a person's physical or mental faculties or any combination of these
120 substances.

121
122 21. Flagger - a person who actively controls the flow of vehicular traffic into and/or through a temporary
123 traffic control zone using hand-signaling devices or an Automated Flagger Assistance Device
124 (AFAD).

125
126 22. Grade Crossing- the general area where a highway and a railroad and/or light rail transit route cross
127 at the same level, within which are included the tracks, highway, and traffic control devices for
128 traffic traversing that area.

129
130 23. Gross vehicle weight - The weight of a vehicle ~~without load~~ plus the weight of any load thereon.
131 [Delete “without load” since the definition includes the weight of the vehicle plus the weight of the
132 load. Also, add “vehicle” to the defined term since this defines a vehicle weight.]

- 134 24. Highway - a general term for denoting a public way for purposes of ~~vehicular~~ travel by vehicles and
135 vulnerable road users, including the entire area within the right-of-way. [Edits to match the 11th
136 Edition definition.]
137
- 138 25. House trailer –
139 (a) A trailer or semitrailer which is designed, constructed and equipped as a dwelling place, living
140 abode or sleeping (either permanently or temporarily) and is equipped for use as a conveyance
141 on streets and highways, or
142 (b) A trailer or a semitrailer whose chassis and exterior shell is designed and constructed for use as
143 a house trailer, as defined in paragraph (a), but which is used instead permanently or
144 temporarily for the advertising, sales, display or promotion of merchandise or services, or for
145 any other commercial purpose except the transportation of property for hire or the
146 transportation of property for distribution by a private carrier.
147
- 148 26. Human-powered vehicle - Every vehicle designed to be moved solely by human power.
149
- 150 27. Intersection -
151 (a) The area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines, or, if none,
152 then the lateral boundary lines of the roadways of two highways which join one another at, or
153 approximately at, right angles, or the area within which vehicles traveling on different
154 highways that join at any other angle might come into conflict.
155 (b) The junction of an alley, driveway, or ~~site side~~ roadway with a public roadway or highway shall
156 not constitute an intersection, unless the public roadway or highway at said junction is
157 controlled by a traffic control device.
158 (c) If a highway includes two roadways, separated by a median, then every crossing of each
159 roadway of such divided highway by an intersecting highway shall be a separate intersection if
160 the opposing left-turn paths cross and there is sufficient interior storage for the design vehicle.
161 (d) At a location controlled by a traffic control signal, regardless of the distance between the
162 separate intersections as defined in (c) above:
163 (1) If a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk has not been designated on the roadway (within the
164 median) between the separate intersections, the two intersections and the roadway
165 (median) between them shall be considered as one intersection;
166 (2) Where a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk is designated on the roadway on the
167 intersection approach, the area within the crosswalk and/or beyond the designated stop
168 line or yield line shall be part of the intersection; and
169 (3) Where a crosswalk is designated on a roadway on the departure from the intersection, the
170 intersection shall include the area extending to the far side of such crosswalk. [Edits to
171 match the 11th Edition definition.]
172
- 173 28. Laned roadway - A roadway which is divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for vehicular
174 traffic.
175
- 176 29. Light Rail Transit Traffic (Light Rail Transit Equipment)—every device in, upon, or by which any
177 person or property can be transported on light rail transit tracks, including single-unit light rail transit
178 cars (such as streetcars and trolleys) and assemblies of multiple light rail transit cars coupled together.
179 [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
180
- 181 30. Local authorities - Every county, municipal and other local board or body having authority to enact
182 laws relating to the traffic under the constitution and laws of this State.
183

- 184 31. Moped - A motor-driven cycle with a motor which produces not to exceed two- brake horsepower
185 and which is not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed in excess of 30 mph on level ground. If
186 an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement shall not exceed 50 cubic centimeters, and
187 the moped shall have a power drive system that functions directly or automatically without clutching
188 or shifting by the operator after the drive system is engaged.
189
- 190 32. Motor vehicle - Every vehicle which is self-propelled, and every vehicle which is propelled by
191 electric power but not operated upon rails, except vehicles moved solely by human power and
192 motorized wheelchairs.
193
- 194 33. Motor-Driven Cycle- Every motorcycle, motor scooter or motorized bicycle having an engine with
195 less than 150 cubic centimeters displacement or with five brake horsepower or less.
196
- 197 34. Motorcycle - Every motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to
198 travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground but excluding a tractor.
199
- 200 35. Motorized wheelchair - Any self-propelled vehicle designed for, and used by, a person with
201 disabilities that is incapable of a speed in excess of eight miles per hour.
202
- 203 36. Official traffic control device - all signs, signals, markings, channelization devices, or other devices
204 that use colors, shapes, symbols, words, sounds, and/or tactile information for the primary purpose
205 of communicating a regulatory, warning, or guidance message to road users on a street, highway,
206 pedestrian facility, bikeway, pathway, or site roadway open to public travel.
207
- 208 37. Park or parking - The standing of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, otherwise than temporarily for
209 the purpose of and while actually engaged in loading or unloading property or passengers.
210
- 211 38. Parking Area - a parking lot or parking garage that is separated from a roadway. Parallel,
212 perpendicular, or angle parking spaces along a roadway are not considered a parking area. [Add the
213 11th Edition definition.]
- 214
- 215 39. Parking Space - an area marked or designated for storage of a vehicle while the driver is not present.
216 [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
217
- 218 40. Pathway - a general term denoting a public way for purposes of travel by authorized users outside the
219 traveled way and physically separated from the roadway by an open space or barrier and either
220 within the highway right-of-way or within an independent alignment. Pathways include shared-use
221 paths, but do not include sidewalks. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
222
- 223 41. Pedestrian - A person on foot, in a wheelchair, on skates, or on a skateboard. [This proposal is to
224 retain the existing ROR definition rather than revise to the 11th Edition definition. At the Midyear
225 2024 meeting, the NC Council approved a recommended change to revert to this definition. This
226 definition matches the NPA definition as well as the 2009, 2003, and 2000 MUTCD definitions.]
227
- 228 42. Person - Every natural person, firm, co-partnership, association or corporation.
229
- 230 43. Person with disabilities - Persons who, as determined by a licensed physician:
231 (a) cannot walk two hundred feet without stopping to rest;
232 (b) cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person,
233 prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistance device;

- 234 (c) restricted by lung disease to such an extent that the person's forced (respiratory) expiratory
235 volume for one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter, or the arterial
236 oxygen tension is less than sixty ~~mm~~ mm of Hg on room air at rest;
- 237 (d) use portable oxygen;
- 238 (e) have a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are classified in
239 severity as Class III or Class IV according to standards set by the American Heart Association;
240 or
- 241 (f) are severely limited in their ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic
242 condition. [This definition is not included in the 11th Edition but it is included in the ROR
243 definitions. This edit is to correct an error in a conversion of the 2000 UVC from a .pdf file to
244 a Word file.]
- 245
- 246 44. Pole trailer - Every vehicle without motive power designed to be drawn by another vehicle and
247 attached to the towing vehicle by means of a reach or pole, or by being boomed or otherwise secured
248 to the towing vehicle, and ordinarily used for transporting long or irregularly shaped loads such as
249 poles, pipes or structural members capable, generally, of sustaining themselves as beams between
250 the supporting connections.
- 251
- 252 45. Police officer - Every officer authorized to direct or regulate traffic or to make arrests or issue
253 citations for violations of traffic laws or ordinances.
- 254
- 255 46. Private road ~~or driveway~~- Every way or place in private ownership and used for vehicular travel by
256 the owner and those having express or implied permission from the owner, but not by other persons.
257 [see also Site Roadways Open to Public Travel.](#) [“Driveway” is a separate definition. Therefore, “or
258 driveway” is proposed to be removed from this defined term. The 11th Edition Definition of “Site
259 Roadways Open to Public Travel” specifically excludes “roadways where access is restricted at all
260 times by gates and/or guards to residents, employees, or other specifically-authorized persons.”
261 Private roads may have gates or guards. Therefore, this proposal is to retain the existing definition of
262 “private road” and add the 11th Edition definition of “Site Roadways Open to Public Travel.”]
- 263
- 264 [47. Rail Traffic - every device in, upon, or by which any person or property can be transported on rails or](#)
265 [tracks and to which all other traffic must yield the right-of-way by law at grade crossings, including](#)
266 [trains, one or more locomotives coupled \(with or without cars\), other railroad equipment, and light rail](#)
267 [transit operating in exclusive or semi-exclusive alignments. Light rail transit operating in a mixed-use](#)
268 [alignment, to which other traffic is not required to yield the right-of-way by law, is a vehicle and is not](#)
269 [considered to be rail traffic.](#) [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
- 270
- 271 48. Railroad - A carrier of persons or property upon cars (other than streetcars), operating upon stationary
272 rails.
- 273
- 274 49. Railroad sign or signal - Any sign, signal or device erected by authority of a public body or official or
275 by a railroad and intended to give notice of the presence of railroad tracks or the approach of a
276 railroad train.
- 277
- 278 50. Railroad train – [see Rail Traffic and Light Rail Transit Traffic](#) ~~A steam engine, electric or other~~
279 ~~motor, with or without cars coupled thereto, operated upon rails (except streetcars).~~ [With the
280 addition of the definitions of Rail Traffic and Light Rail Transit Traffic, this definition is no longer
281 considered necessary. References to the added definitions are provided.]
- 282

- 283 51. Residence district - The territory contiguous to and including a highway not comprising a business
284 district when the property on such highway for a distance of 300 feet or more is in the main
285 improved with residences, or residences and buildings in use for business.
286
- 287 52. Right of way [Assignment] - the permitting of vehicles and/or pedestrians to proceed in a lawful
288 manner in preference to other vehicles or pedestrians, including by the display of a sign or signal
289 indications.
290
- 291 53. Road User - a vehicle operator, bicyclist, or pedestrian, including persons with disabilities, within the
292 highway or on a site roadway open to public travel. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
293
- 294 54. Roadway - that portion of a highway improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular travel and
295 parking lanes, but, exclusive of the sidewalk, berm or shoulder even though such sidewalk, berm or
296 shoulder is used by persons riding bicycles or other human powered vehicles. In the event a
297 highway includes two or more separate roadways, the term roadway ~~as used in this Manual~~ shall
298 refer to any such roadway separately but not to all such roadways collectively unless otherwise
299 noted. [Edits to match the 11th Edition definition and to eliminate the reference to "this manual"
300 since this definition will be in the ROR rather than the MUTCD.]
301
- 302 55. Safety zone - The area or space officially set apart within a roadway for the exclusive use of
303 pedestrians and which is protected or is so marked or indicated by official traffic control devices as
304 to be plainly visible at all times as set apart as a safety zone.
305
- 306 56. School bus - Every bus that is used to transport children to or from school or in connection with
307 school activities, but not including buses operated by common carriers in urban transportation who
308 incidentally accept school children as passengers.
309
- 310 57. Semitrailer - Every vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer, designed for
311 carrying persons or property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and so constructed that some
312 part of its weight and that of its load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle.
313
- 314 58. Shared-Use Path - a bikeway outside the traveled way and physically separated from motorized
315 vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an
316 independent alignment. Shared-use paths are also used by pedestrians (including skaters, users of
317 manual and motorized wheelchairs, and joggers) and other authorized motorized and non-motorized
318 users. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
319
- 320 59. Shoulder - a longitudinal area contiguous with the traveled way used for accommodation of stopped
321 vehicles for emergency use and for lateral support of base and surface courses, and that is graded for
322 emergency stopping. A shoulder might be paved or unpaved. A paved shoulder might be open to
323 part-time travel by some or all vehicles and might also be available for use by pedestrians and/or
324 bicycles in the absence of other pedestrian or bicycle facilities, ~~or by all vehicles at certain times,~~
325 ~~and might also be used by pedestrians.~~ [Edits to match the 11th Edition definition.]
326
- 327 60. Sidewalk - That portion of a street between the curb line, or the lateral line of a roadway, and the
328 adjacent property line or on easements of private property that is paved or improved and intended for
329 use by pedestrians.
330
- 331 61. Site Roadways Open to Public Travel - Roadways and bikeways on sites of shopping centers, office
332 parks, airports, schools, universities, sports arenas, recreational parks, and other similar business,
333 governmental, and/or recreation facilities that are publicly or privately owned but where the public is

- 334 allowed to travel without full-time access restrictions. Two types of roadways are not included in
335 this definition: (1) roadways where access is restricted at all times by gates and/or guards to
336 residents, employees, or other specifically-authorized persons; and (2) private highway-rail grade
337 crossings. Site roadways open to public travel do not include parking areas, including the driving
338 aisles within those parking areas. [See also Private Road.](#) [Since “Private Road” is proposed to be
339 retained as a separate definition, this reference is proposed to be added.]
340
- 341 62. Stand or standing - The halting of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, otherwise than temporarily for
342 the purpose of and while actually engaged in receiving or discharging passengers.
343
- 344 63. State - A state, territory or possession of the United States, the District of Columbia, [or the](#)
345 [Commonwealth of Puerto Rico](#) ~~or a province of Canada.~~ [Edited to omit the reference to “a province
346 of Canada” since this document is intended for use in the U.S.]
347
- 348 64. Stop - When required means complete cessation from movement.
349
- 350 [65. Stop Line—a solid white pavement marking line extending across approach lanes to indicate the](#)
351 [point at which a stop is intended or required to be made.](#) [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
352
- 353 66. Stop or stopping - When prohibited means any halting even momentarily of a vehicle, whether
354 occupied or not, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the
355 directions of a police officer or official traffic control device.
356
- 357 67. Street - see Highway.
358
- 359 68. Streetcar - A car other than a railroad train for transporting persons or property and operated upon
360 rails principally within a municipality.
361
- 362 69. Through highway - Every highway or portion thereof on which vehicular traffic is given preferential
363 right of way, and at the entrances to which vehicular traffic from intersecting highways is required
364 by law to yield the right of way to vehicles on such through highway in obedience to a stop sign,
365 yield sign, or other official traffic control device, when such signs or devices are erected as provided
366 in this code.
367
- 368 70. Traffic - Pedestrians, bicyclists, ridden or herded animals, vehicles, streetcars and other conveyances
369 either singly or together while using for purposes of travel any highway or site roadway open to
370 public travel.
371
- 372 [71. Traffic Control Device - See Official Traffic Control Device.](#) [The 11th Edition definition of “Traffic
373 Control Device” is the current ROR definition of “Official Traffic Control Device.” “Official Traffic
374 Control Device” is used several times in the ROR definitions and text. Therefore, it is proposed to
375 retain the current ROR definition as “Official Traffic Control Device” term and add this to direct
376 users to that definition.]
377
- 378 72. Traffic control signal (traffic signal) - a highway traffic signal placed at intersections, movable
379 bridges, fire stations, midblock crosswalks, alternating one-way section of a single lane road, private
380 driveways, or other locations that require conflicting traffic to be directed to stop and permitted to
381 proceed in an orderly manner.
382

- 383 73. Trailer - Every vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer, designed for carrying
384 persons or property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and so constructed that no part of its
385 weight rests upon the towing vehicle.
386
- 387 74. Train—see Rail Traffic. [Add a reference to the 11th Edition definition of Rail Traffic.]
388
- 389 75. Truck - Every motor vehicle designed, used or maintained primarily for the transportation of
390 property.
391
- 392 76. Urban district - The territory contiguous to and including any street which is built up with structures
393 devoted to business, industry or dwelling houses situated at intervals of less than 100 feet for a
394 distance of a quarter of a mile or more.
395
- 396 77. Vehicle - every device in, upon, or by which any person or property can be transported or drawn upon
397 a highway, except trains and light rail transit operating in exclusive or semi-exclusive alignments.
398 Light rail transit equipment operating in a mixed-use alignment, to which other traffic is not required
399 to yield the right-of-way by law, is a vehicle. [Edits to match the 11th Edition definition.]
400
- 401 78. Yield Line—a row of solid white isosceles triangles pointing toward approaching vehicles extending
402 across approach lanes to indicate the point at which the yield is intended or required to be made.
403 [Add the 11th Edition definition.]