



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item No.: 24A-RW-02

NCUTCD PROPOSAL FOR CHANGES TO THE MANUAL ON UNIFORM TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Regulatory and Warning Signs Technical Committee
ITEM NUMBER: 24A-RW-02
TOPIC: Neighborhood Traffic Circle Yield Sign Guidance
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: RW Roundabout Task Force Members: Rich Meredith, Doug Bartlett, Gerry Wilhelm and Randy McCourt (chair)
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD: 2B.39 Keep Right and Keep Left Signs
2B.51 Roundabout Circulation Plaque
Figure 2B-24

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by Technical Committee: 02/13/2024 and 06/26/2024
Approved by NCUTCD Council: 06/27/2024

This is a proposal for recommended changes to the MUTCD that has been approved by the NCUTCD Council. This proposal does not represent a revision of the MUTCD and does not constitute official MUTCD standards, guidance, or options. It will be submitted to FHWA for consideration for inclusion in a future MUTCD revision. The MUTCD can be revised only through the federal rulemaking process.

SUMMARY:

Traffic circles are traffic calming measures and not roundabouts. They are commonly on low volume streets and utilized stop signs, yield signs or no control, in some cases, permit left turns in front of the circle for larger trucks and emergency service vehicles. The figure and text in paragraph 01 implies yield signs and roundabout-like circulation are required for neighborhood traffic circle when in application they are not. This proposed change deletes the figure and text.

DISCUSSION:

In the 2023 MUTCD Figure 2B-24 Example of Regulatory and Warning Signs for a Neighborhood Traffic Circle was added. Additionally, the concept of a neighborhood traffic circle is introduced in the 2023 MUTCD in paragraph 01 of Section 2B.51. This is new material that was not in the 2020 NPA the FHWA released for public comment and subject to comment and input from the transportation profession.

The neighborhood traffic circle is not a roundabout, although it is a circular intersection. Paragraph 01 of Section 2B.51 conflates the circles with roundabouts operationally. FHWA-SA-10-007 established this conflation, but in the 2023 NCHRP 1043, a clear distinction is made between roundabouts and traffic circles noting these are separated measures and should not be conflated. Neighborhood traffic circles, by their title, are used most commonly on residential neighborhoods with low traffic volumes and speeds. Neighborhood traffic circles are commonly

37 considered traffic calming measures used to retrofit streets with characteristics that may have
38 contributed to higher vehicle speeds than considered prudent for neighborhood settings. They
39 are circular geometrically but are not roundabouts operationally.

40
41 Neighborhood traffic circles exist in settings that may or may not involve stop sign warrants or
42 low volumes that may not warrant any traffic control. Therefore, a technical correction is needed
43 to the 2023 MUTCD since this was in error and not subject to public review. The added figure
44 and text that was placed in the 2023 MUTCD should be removed. To address this technical
45 correction, four changes are proposed: 1) delete Section 2B.39, paragraph 06; 2) delete the text
46 in Section 2B.51, paragraph 01 referring to neighborhood traffic circle; 3) delete Section 2B.51,
47 paragraph 02; and 4) delete Figure 2B-24). A possible future proposal for traffic control devices
48 at neighborhood traffic circles would be welcome with practitioner review and comment.

49
50 Sponsor comment focused on the desire to retain the content and modify it. Because
51 assessment of best practice is needed to produce a NCUTCD proposal of this type, the first
52 step is the removal of content that conflates neighborhood traffic calming circles with
53 roundabouts and directs designers to applications that do not match the range of field
54 applications, which commonly includes no control. Areas to explore will include the definitions
55 that are missing, proper use of regulatory signs for neighborhood traffic calming circles,
56 clarifying that neighborhood traffic calming circles should not be conflated with roundabouts,
57 refined graphics showing the uniform options that exist for intersection control and warning v.
58 regulatory signs and markings in the circle, along with supportive research and practical
59 experience results from installations.

60
61 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:**

62 The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the
63 current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and
64 proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously
65 approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double
66 underline for additions and ~~green double strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases,
67 background comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated
68 by bracketed white text in shaded green. Deletions made by a technical committee or task
69 force after initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in ~~highlighted red~~
70 ~~strikethrough and Helvetica text~~. Additions made by a technical committee or task force after
71 initial distribution to sponsoring organizations are shown in underline blue and Helvetica text.

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73 **PART 2. SIGNS**

74
75 **CHAPTER 2B. REGULATORY SIGNS, BARRICADES, AND GATES**

76
77 **Section 2B.39 Keep Right and Keep Left Signs (R4-7 Series and R4-8 Series)**

78 Option:

79 01 The Keep Right (R4-7) sign (see Figure 2B-10) may be used at locations where it is necessary for
80 traffic to pass only to the right-hand side of a roadway feature or obstruction. The Keep Left (R4-8) sign
81 (see Figure 2B-10) may be used at locations where it is necessary for traffic to pass only to the left-hand
82 side of a roadway feature or obstruction.

83 *Guidance:*

84 02 *At locations where it is not readily apparent that traffic is required to keep to the right, a Keep Right*
85 *sign should be used.*

86 **Standard:**

87 03 If Keep Right signs are installed at the start of a median or at a median opening, they shall be
88 placed as close as practicable to the approach ends of the medians, and shall be visible to traffic on
89 the divided highway and angled toward the applicable crossroad approach as shown in Figure 2B-
90 20.

91 *Guidance:*

92 04 If used, the Keep Right sign should be mounted on the face of or just in front of a pier or other
93 obstruction separating opposite directions of traffic in the center of the highway such that traffic will
94 have to pass to the right-hand side of the sign.

95 05 Where the approach end of the island channelizes traffic away from the approach direction, the
96 word legend (R4-7a, R4-7b, R4-8a, or R4-8b) signs (see Figure 2B-10) should be used instead of the
97 symbol (R4-7 or R4-8) signs to emphasize the degree of curvature away from the approach direction (see
98 Figure 2B-11).

99 ~~06 Where a regulatory sign is used within the central island of a neighborhood traffic circle to direct~~
100 ~~traffic counter clockwise around the central island, the Keep Right with diagonal arrow (R4-7b) sign~~
101 ~~should be used (see Figure 2B-24). The mounting height of the sign should be at least 4 feet, measured~~
102 ~~vertically from the bottom of the sign to the elevation of the near edge of the traveled way.~~

103 **NOTE: All other paragraphs (07-13) remain the same.**

104 **Section 2B.51 Roundabout Circulation Plaque (R6-5P)**

105 *Guidance:*

106 01 Where the central island of a roundabout ~~or neighborhood traffic circle~~ does not provide a
107 reasonable place to install a sign as provided elsewhere in this Chapter, Roundabout Circulation (R6-5P)
108 plaques (see Figure 2B-13) should be placed below the YIELD signs on each approach.

109 *Support:*

110 ~~02 Paragraph 6 of Section 2B.39 contains information about the use of a Keep Right (R4-7b) sign in the~~
111 ~~central island of a neighborhood traffic circle.~~

112 03 Paragraph 12 of Section 2B.49 contains information about the use of a ONE WAY (R6-1 or R6-2)
113 sign in the central island of a roundabout.

114 *Option:*

115 04 At roundabouts where ONE WAY signs have been installed in the central island, Roundabout
116 Circulation plaques may be placed below the YIELD signs on approaches to roundabouts to supplement
117 the central island signs.

118 05 The Roundabout Circulation plaque may be used at any type of circular intersection.

119 *Support:*

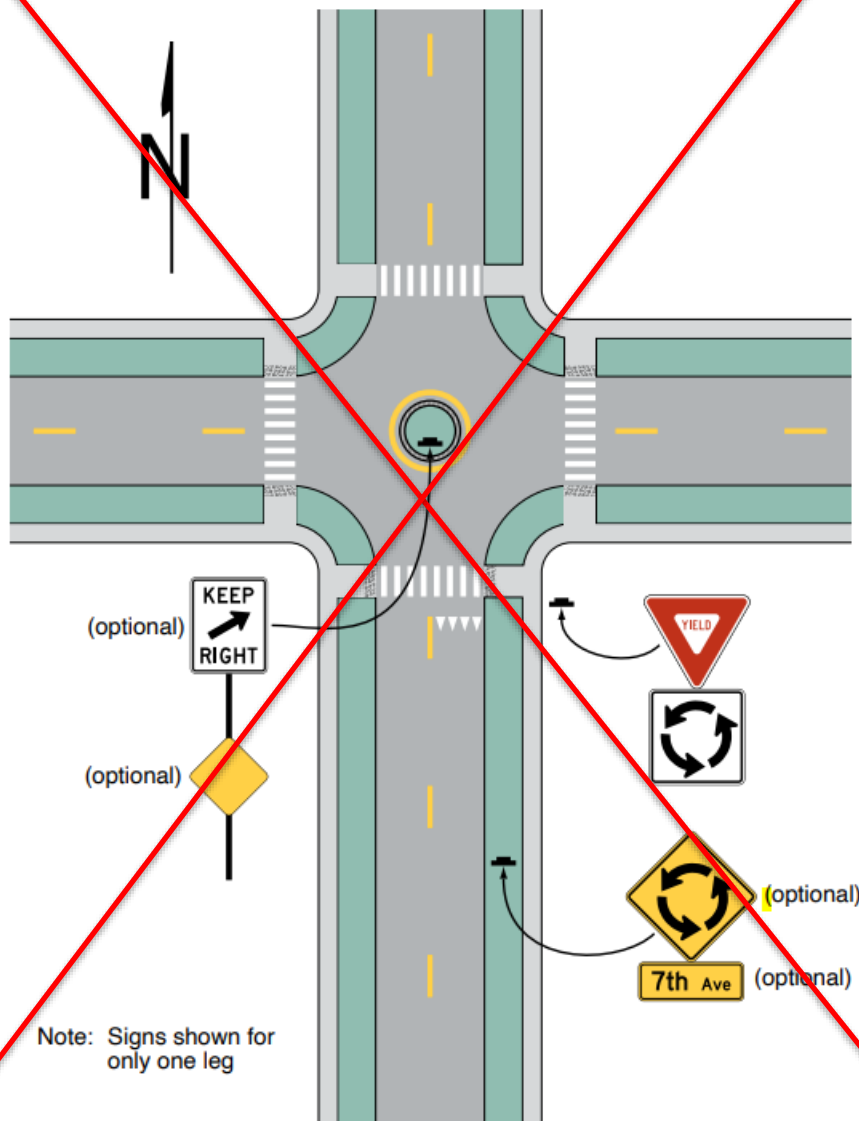
120 06 Examples of regulatory and warning signs for roundabouts ~~and neighborhood traffic circles~~ are
121 shown in Figures 2B-21 through 2B-24~~3~~.

122

123 **NOTE: Figures 2B-25 through 2B-34 would need to be renumbered accordingly (one less).**

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Figure 2B-24. Example of Regulatory and Warning Signs for a Neighborhood Traffic Circle



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