



National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

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Item No.: 24B-ROR-01

NCUTCD REVISIONS TO THE 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 ROR JTF 07/25/2024, 12/12/2024
Approved by NCUTCD Council: 01/09/2025

This is a revision to the NCUTCD Rules of the Road (ROR) that has been approved by the NCUTCD Council. This recommendation is a model law and does not create or modify any official statute or ordinance.

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.

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

32 The following present the proposed changes to the current NCUTCD ROR within the context of
33 the ROR language. Proposed additions to the ROR are shown in blue underline and proposed
34 deletions from the ROR are shown in ~~red-strikethrough~~. In some cases, background comments
35 may be provided with the ROR text. These comments are indicated by [bracketed white text in
36 shaded green].

37
38
39 **CHAPTER 1 - DEFINITIONS**
40

41 [Note: Due to the addition and deletion of definitions, numbering is now revised from the previous
42 version of definitions established in 21B-ROR-04. Specific changes in definition numbers are not shown
43 for simplicity.]

44
45 The following words and phrases when used in this code shall, for the purpose of this code, have the
46 meanings respectively ascribed to them in this chapter, except when the context otherwise requires
47 interpretation.

- 48
- 49 1. Agency - an organization with the responsibility for providing, maintaining, and/or operating a
50 public or private road system.
 - 51
 - 52 2. Alcohol - any substance or substances containing any form of alcohol.
 - 53
 - 54 3. Alley - A street or highway intended to provide access to the rear or side of lots or buildings in urban
55 districts and not intended for the purpose of through vehicular traffic.
 - 56
 - 57 4. Arterial Highway (Street) - a general term denoting a highway primarily used by through traffic,
58 usually on a continuous route or a highway designated as part of an arterial system.
 - 59
 - 60 5. Authorized emergency vehicle - Such fire department vehicles, police vehicles and ambulances as
61 are publicly owned, and such other publicly or privately owned vehicles as are designated by the
62 commissioner of motor vehicles (or other appropriate state official).
 - 63
 - 64 6. Bicycle - a pedal-powered vehicle upon which the human operator sits.
 - 65
 - 66 7. Bus - A self-propelled rubber tired vehicle designed to carry a substantial number of passengers
67 commonly operated on streets and highways.
 - 68
 - 69 8. Business district - The territory contiguous to and including a highway when within any 600 feet
70 along such highway there are buildings in use for business or industrial purposes, including but not
71 limited to hotels, banks, or office buildings, railroad stations and public buildings which occupy at
72 least 300 feet of frontage on one side or 300 feet collectively on both sides of the highway.
 - 73
 - 74 9. Commissioner - The commissioner of motor vehicles of this State. Note: If the term "commissioner"
75 is not appropriate in a particular state, then the appropriate term and definition should be substituted.
 - 76
 - 77 10. Controlled-access highway - Every highway, street or roadway in respect to which owners or
78 occupants of abutting land and other persons have no legal right of access to or from the same except
79 at such points only and in such manner as may be determined by the public authority having
80 jurisdiction over such highway, street or roadway.

- 81
82 11. Crosswalk –
83 (a) That part of a roadway at an intersection included within the connections of the lateral lines of
84 the sidewalks on opposite sides of the highway measured from the curbs or, in the absence of
85 curbs, from the edges of the traversable roadway; and in the absence of a sidewalk on one side
86 of the roadway, the part of a roadway included within the extension of the lateral lines of the
87 sidewalk at right angles to the center line.
88 (b) Any portion of a roadway at an intersection or elsewhere distinctly indicated as a pedestrian
89 crossing by pavement marking lines on the surface, which might be supplemented by
90 contrasting pavement texture, style, or color.
91
92 12. Department - The department of motor vehicles of this State.
93
94 13. Divided highway - A highway divided into two or more roadways by leaving an intervening space or
95 by a physical barrier or by clearly indicated dividing section so constructed as to impede vehicular
96 traffic.
97
98 14. Drive - To operate or be in physical control of a vehicle.
99
100 15. Driven - To have operated or been in physical control of a vehicle.
101
102 16. Driver - Every person who drives or is in actual physical control of a vehicle.
103
104 17. Driving - Operating or being in physical control of a vehicle.
105
106 18. Driveway- an access from a roadway to a building, site, or abutting property.
107
108 19. Driving Aisle - circulation area for motor vehicles within a parking area, typically between rows of
109 parking spaces. Driving aisles provide one-way or two-way travel. ~~Driving aisles are exempted from~~
110 ~~compliance with MUTCD provisions.~~ [Add the 11th Edition definition but omit the last sentence
111 since this is the ROR rather than the MUTCD.]
112
113 20. Drug - A controlled substance as defined by State or federal law or any other drug or psychoactive
114 substance capable of impairing a person's physical or mental faculties or any combination of these
115 substances.
116
117 21. Flagger - a person who actively controls the flow of vehicular traffic into and/or through a temporary
118 traffic control zone using hand-signaling devices or an Automated Flagger Assistance Device
119 (AFAD).
120
121 22. Grade Crossing- the general area where a highway and a railroad and/or light rail transit route cross
122 at the same level, within which are included the tracks, highway, and traffic control devices for
123 traffic traversing that area.
124
125 23. Gross vehicle weight - The weight of a vehicle ~~without load~~ plus the weight of any load thereon.
126 [Delete “without load” since the definition includes the weight of the vehicle plus the weight of the
127 load. Also, add “vehicle” to the defined term since this defines a vehicle weight.]
128
129 24. Highway - a general term for denoting a public way for purposes of ~~vehicular~~ travel by vehicles and
130 vulnerable road users, including the entire area within the right-of-way. [Edits to match the 11th
131 Edition definition.]

- 132
133 25. House trailer –
134 (a) A trailer or semitrailer which is designed, constructed and equipped as a dwelling place, living
135 abode or sleeping (either permanently or temporarily) and is equipped for use as a conveyance
136 on streets and highways, or
137 (b) A trailer or a semitrailer whose chassis and exterior shell is designed and constructed for use as
138 a house trailer, as defined in paragraph (a), but which is used instead permanently or
139 temporarily for the advertising, sales, display or promotion of merchandise or services, or for
140 any other commercial purpose except the transportation of property for hire or the
141 transportation of property for distribution by a private carrier.
142
- 143 26. Human-powered vehicle - Every vehicle designed to be moved solely by human power.
144
- 145 27. Intersection -
146 (a) The area embraced within the prolongation or connection of the lateral curb lines, or, if none,
147 then the lateral boundary lines of the roadways of two highways which join one another at, or
148 approximately at, right angles, or the area within which vehicles traveling on different
149 highways that join at any other angle might come into conflict.
150 (b) The junction of an alley, driveway, or ~~site side~~ roadway with a public roadway or highway shall
151 not constitute an intersection, unless the public roadway or highway at said junction is
152 controlled by a traffic control device.
153 (c) If a highway includes two roadways, separated by a median, then every crossing of each
154 roadway of such divided highway by an intersecting highway shall be a separate intersection if
155 the opposing left-turn paths cross and there is sufficient interior storage for the design vehicle.
156 (d) At a location controlled by a traffic control signal, regardless of the distance between the
157 separate intersections as defined in (c) above:
158 (1) If a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk has not been designated on the roadway (within the
159 median) between the separate intersections, the two intersections and the roadway
160 (median) between them shall be considered as one intersection;
161 (2) Where a stop line, yield line, or crosswalk is designated on the roadway on the
162 intersection approach, the area within the crosswalk and/or beyond the designated stop
163 line or yield line shall be part of the intersection; and
164 (3) Where a crosswalk is designated on a roadway on the departure from the intersection, the
165 intersection shall include the area extending to the far side of such crosswalk. **[Edits to**
166 **match the 11th Edition definition.]**
167
- 168 28. Laned roadway - A roadway which is divided into two or more clearly marked lanes for vehicular
169 traffic.
170
- 171 29. Light Rail Transit Traffic (Light Rail Transit Equipment) - every device in, upon, or by which any
172 person or property can be transported on light rail transit tracks, including single-unit light rail transit
173 cars (such as streetcars and trolleys) and assemblies of multiple light rail transit cars coupled
174 together. **[Add the 11th Edition definition.]**
175
- 176 30. Local authorities - Every county, municipal and other local board or body having authority to enact
177 laws relating to the traffic under the constitution and laws of this State.
178
- 179 31. Moped - A motor-driven cycle with a motor which produces not to exceed two- brake horsepower
180 and which is not capable of propelling the vehicle at a speed in excess of 30 mph on level ground. If
181 an internal combustion engine is used, the displacement shall not exceed 50 cubic centimeters, and

182 the moped shall have a power drive system that functions directly or automatically without clutching
183 or shifting by the operator after the drive system is engaged.

184
185 32. Motor vehicle - Every vehicle which is self-propelled, and every vehicle which is propelled by
186 electric power but not operated upon rails, except vehicles moved solely by human power and
187 motorized wheelchairs.

188
189 33. Motor-Driven Cycle- Every motorcycle, motor scooter or motorized bicycle having an engine with
190 less than 150 cubic centimeters displacement or with five brake horsepower or less.

191
192 34. Motorcycle - Every motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to
193 travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground but excluding a tractor.

194
195 35. Motorized wheelchair - Any self-propelled vehicle designed for, and used by, a person with
196 disabilities that is incapable of a speed in excess of eight miles per hour.

197
198 36. Official traffic control device - all signs, signals, markings, channelization devices, or other devices
199 that use colors, shapes, symbols, words, sounds, and/or tactile information for the primary purpose
200 of communicating a regulatory, warning, or guidance message to road users on a street, highway,
201 pedestrian facility, bikeway, pathway, or site roadway open to public travel.

202
203 37. Park or parking - The standing of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, otherwise than temporarily for
204 the purpose of and while actually engaged in loading or unloading property or passengers.

205
206 38. Parking Area - a parking lot or parking garage that is separated from a roadway. Parallel,
207 perpendicular, or angle parking spaces along a roadway are not considered a parking area. [Add the
208 11th Edition definition.]

209
210 39. Parking Space - an area marked or designated for storage of a vehicle while the driver is not present.
211 [Add the 11th Edition definition.]

212
213 40. Pathway - a general term denoting a public way for purposes of travel by authorized users outside the
214 traveled way and physically separated from the roadway by an open space or barrier and either
215 within the highway right-of-way or within an independent alignment. Pathways include shared-use
216 paths, but do not include sidewalks. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]

217
218 41. Pedestrian - A person on foot, in a wheelchair, on skates, or on a skateboard. [This proposal is to
219 retain the existing ROR definition rather than revise to the 11th Edition definition. At the Midyear
220 2024 meeting, the NC Council approved a recommended change to revert to this definition. This
221 definition matches the NPA definition as well as the 2009, 2003, and 2000 MUTCD definitions.]

222
223 42. Person - Every natural person, firm, co-partnership, association or corporation.

224
225 ~~43. Person with disabilities—Persons who, as determined by a licensed physician:~~
226 ~~(a)—cannot walk two hundred feet without stopping to rest;~~
227 ~~(b)—cannot walk without the use of, or assistance from, a brace, cane, crutch, another person,~~
228 ~~prosthetic device, wheelchair, or other assistance device;~~
229 ~~(c)—restricted by lung disease to such an extent that the person's forced (respiratory) expiratory~~
230 ~~volume for one second, when measured by spirometry, is less than one liter, or the arterial~~
231 ~~oxygen tension is less than sixty mm nun of Hg on room air at rest;~~
232 ~~(d)—use portable oxygen;~~

- 233 (e) ~~have a cardiac condition to the extent that the person's functional limitations are classified in~~
234 ~~severity as Class III or Class IV according to standards set by the American Heart Association;~~
235 ~~or~~
236 (f) ~~are severely limited in their ability to walk due to an arthritic, neurological, or orthopedic~~
237 ~~condition.~~
238

239 43. Pole trailer - Every vehicle without motive power designed to be drawn by another vehicle and
240 attached to the towing vehicle by means of a reach or pole, or by being boomed or otherwise secured
241 to the towing vehicle, and ordinarily used for transporting long or irregularly shaped loads such as
242 poles, pipes or structural members capable, generally, of sustaining themselves as beams between
243 the supporting connections.
244

245 44. Police officer - Every officer authorized to direct or regulate traffic or to make arrests or issue
246 citations for violations of traffic laws or ordinances.
247

248 45. Private road ~~or driveway~~ - Every way or place in private ownership and used for vehicular travel by
249 the owner and those having express or implied permission from the owner, but not by other persons.
250 see also Site Roadways Open to Public Travel. ["Driveway" is a separate definition. Therefore, "or
251 driveway" is proposed to be removed from this defined term. The 11th Edition Definition of "Site
252 Roadways Open to Public Travel" specifically excludes "roadways where access is restricted at all
253 times by gates and/or guards to residents, employees, or other specifically-authorized persons."
254 Private roads may have gates or guards. Therefore, this proposal is to retain the existing definition of
255 "private road" and add the 11th Edition definition of "Site Roadways Open to Public Travel."]
256

257 46. Rail Traffic - every device in, upon, or by which any person or property can be transported on rails or
258 tracks and to which all other traffic must yield the right-of-way by law at grade crossings, including
259 trains, one or more locomotives coupled (with or without cars), other railroad equipment, and light
260 rail transit operating in exclusive or semi-exclusive alignments. Light rail transit operating in a
261 mixed-use alignment, to which other traffic is not required to yield the right-of-way by law, is a
262 vehicle and is not considered to be rail traffic. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
263

264 47. Railroad - A carrier of persons or property upon cars (other than streetcars), operating upon stationary
265 rails.
266

267 48. Railroad sign or signal - Any sign, signal or device erected by authority of a public body or official or
268 by a railroad and intended to give notice of the presence of railroad tracks or the approach of a
269 railroad train.
270

271 49. Railroad train – see Rail Traffic and Light Rail Transit Traffic ~~A steam engine, electric or other~~
272 ~~motor, with or without cars coupled thereto, operated upon rails (except streetcars).~~ [With the
273 addition of the definitions of Rail Traffic and Light Rail Transit Traffic, this definition is no longer
274 considered necessary. References to the added definitions are provided.]
275

276 50. Residence district - The territory contiguous to and including a highway not comprising a business
277 district when the property on such highway for a distance of 300 feet or more is in the main improved
278 with residences, or residences and buildings in use for business.
279

280 51. Right of way [Assignment] - the permitting of vehicles and/or pedestrians to proceed in a lawful
281 manner in preference to other vehicles or pedestrians, including by the display of a sign or signal
282 indications.
283

- 284 52. Road User - a vehicle operator, bicyclist, or pedestrian, including persons with disabilities, within the
285 highway or on a site roadway open to public travel. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
286
- 287 53. Roadway - that portion of a highway improved, designed or ordinarily used for vehicular travel and
288 parking lanes, but, exclusive of the sidewalk, berm or shoulder even though such sidewalk, berm or
289 shoulder is used by persons riding bicycles or other human powered vehicles. In the event a
290 highway includes two or more separate roadways, the term roadway ~~as used in this Manual~~ shall
291 refer to any such roadway separately but not to all such roadways collectively unless otherwise
292 noted. [Edits to match the 11th Edition definition and to eliminate the reference to “this manual”
293 since this definition will be in the ROR rather than the MUTCD.]
294
- 295 54. Safety zone - The area or space officially set apart within a roadway for the exclusive use of
296 pedestrians and which is protected or is so marked or indicated by official traffic control devices as
297 to be plainly visible at all times as set apart as a safety zone.
298
- 299 55. School bus - Every bus that is used to transport children to or from school or in connection with
300 school activities, but not including buses operated by common carriers in urban transportation who
301 incidentally accept school children as passengers.
302
- 303 56. Semitrailer - Every vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer, designed for
304 carrying persons or property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and so constructed that some
305 part of its weight and that of its load rests upon or is carried by another vehicle.
306
- 307 57. Shared-Use Path - a bikeway outside the traveled way and physically separated from motorized
308 vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an
309 independent alignment. Shared-use paths are also used by pedestrians (including skaters, users of
310 manual and motorized wheelchairs, and joggers) and other authorized motorized and non-motorized
311 users. [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
312
- 313 58. Shoulder - a longitudinal area contiguous with the traveled way used for accommodation of stopped
314 vehicles for emergency use and for lateral support of base and surface courses, and that is graded for
315 emergency stopping. A shoulder might be paved or unpaved. A paved shoulder might be open to
316 part-time travel by some or all vehicles and might also be available for use by pedestrians and/or
317 bicycles in the absence of other pedestrian or bicycle facilities, ~~or by all vehicles at certain times,~~
318 ~~and might also be used by pedestrians.~~ [Edits to match the 11th Edition definition.]
319
- 320 59. Sidewalk - That portion of a street between the curb line, or the lateral line of a roadway, and the
321 adjacent property line or on easements of private property that is paved or improved and intended for
322 use by pedestrians.
323
- 324 60. Site Roadways Open to Public Travel - Roadways and bikeways on sites of shopping centers, office
325 parks, airports, schools, universities, sports arenas, recreational parks, and other similar business,
326 governmental, and/or recreation facilities that are publicly or privately owned but where the public is
327 allowed to travel without full-time access restrictions. Two types of roadways are not included in
328 this definition: (1) roadways where access is restricted at all times by gates and/or guards to
329 residents, employees, or other specifically-authorized persons; and (2) private highway-rail grade
330 crossings. Site roadways open to public travel do not include parking areas, including the driving
331 aisles within those parking areas. See also Private Road. [Since “Private Road” is proposed to be
332 retained as a separate definition, this reference is proposed to be added.]
333

- 334 61. Stand or standing - The halting of a vehicle, whether occupied or not, otherwise than temporarily for
335 the purpose of and while actually engaged in receiving or discharging passengers.
336
- 337 62. State - A state, territory, [commonwealth](#), or possession of the United States, [including](#) the District of
338 Columbia, ~~or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or a province of Canada.~~ [Edited to omit the
339 reference to “a province of Canada” since this document is intended for use in the U.S. and to list
340 commonwealth along with state, territory, and possession rather than specifying only Puerto Rico].
341
- 342 63. Stop - When required means complete cessation from movement.
343
- 344 [64. Stop Line—a solid white pavement marking line extending across approach lanes to indicate the](#)
345 [point at which a stop is intended or required to be made.](#) [Add the 11th Edition definition.]
346
- 347 65. Stop or stopping - When prohibited means any halting even momentarily of a vehicle, whether
348 occupied or not, except when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or in compliance with the
349 directions of a police officer or official traffic control device.
350
- 351 66. Street - see Highway.
352
- 353 67. Streetcar - A car other than a railroad train for transporting persons or property and operated upon
354 rails principally within a municipality.
355
- 356 68. Through highway - Every highway or portion thereof on which vehicular traffic is given preferential
357 right of way, and at the entrances to which vehicular traffic from intersecting highways is required
358 by law to yield the right of way to vehicles on such through highway in obedience to a stop sign,
359 yield sign, or other official traffic control device, when such signs or devices are erected as provided
360 in this code.
361
- 362 69. Traffic - Pedestrians, bicyclists, ridden or herded animals, vehicles, streetcars and other conveyances
363 either singly or together while using for purposes of travel any highway or site roadway open to
364 public travel.
365
- 366 [70. Traffic Control Device - See Official Traffic Control Device.](#) [The 11th Edition definition of “Traffic
367 Control Device” is the current ROR definition of “Official Traffic Control Device.” “Official Traffic
368 Control Device” is used several times in the ROR definitions and text. Therefore, it is proposed to
369 retain the current ROR definition as “Official Traffic Control Device” term and add this to direct
370 users to that definition.]
371
- 372 71. Traffic control signal (traffic signal) - a highway traffic signal placed at intersections, movable
373 bridges, fire stations, midblock crosswalks, alternating one-way section of a single lane road, private
374 driveways, or other locations that require conflicting traffic to be directed to stop and permitted to
375 proceed in an orderly manner.
376
- 377 72. Trailer - Every vehicle with or without motive power, other than a pole trailer, designed for carrying
378 persons or property and for being drawn by a motor vehicle and so constructed that no part of its
379 weight rests upon the towing vehicle.
380
- 381 [73. Train—see Rail Traffic.](#) [Add a reference to the 11th Edition definition of Rail Traffic.]
382
- 383 74. Truck - Every motor vehicle designed, used or maintained primarily for the transportation of
384 property.

- 385
386 75. Urban district - The territory contiguous to and including any street which is built up with structures
387 devoted to business, industry or dwelling houses situated at intervals of less than 100 feet for a
388 distance of a quarter of a mile or more.
389
- 390 76. Vehicle - every device in, upon, or by which any person or property can be transported or drawn upon
391 a highway, except trains and light rail transit operating in exclusive or semi-exclusive alignments.
392 Light rail transit equipment operating in a mixed-use alignment, to which other traffic is not required
393 to yield the right-of-way by law, is a vehicle. [Edits to match the 11th Edition definition.]
394
- 395 77. Yield Line—a row of solid white isosceles triangles pointing toward approaching vehicles extending
396 across approach lanes to indicate the point at which the yield is intended or required to be made.
397 [Add the 11th Edition definition.]