



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-RR-02

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

COMMITTEE / TASK FORCE: Railroad & Light Rail Transit Technical Committee
ITEM NUMBER: 24B-RR-02
TOPIC: Automatic Pedestrian Gates at LRT Grade Crossings
ORIGIN OF REQUEST: RRLRT Technical Committee
AFFECTED SECTIONS OF MUTCD: Section 8E.07, Active Traffic Control Systems

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY:

Approved by RRLRT TC: 06/27/2024 and 01/08/2025
Approved by NCUTCD Council: 01/10/2025

This is a recommended change 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:

The purpose of the proposal is to clarify the language in the 11th Edition and provide that automatic pedestrian gates are not required at pathway-LRT and sidewalk-LRT grade crossings where LRT speeds exceed 40 mph.

DISCUSSION:

Section 8E.09 provides Standards, Guidance, and Options for automatic pedestrian gates at grade crossings (freight and LRT). The Standard in Paragraph 2 establishes that automatic pedestrian gates are required at grade crossings where train speeds are 80 mph or greater. The Option in Paragraph 1 permits automatic pedestrian gates to be used at pathway and sidewalk grade crossings where train speeds are less than 80 mph.

In Section 8E.07, the Standards in Paragraphs 1 and 2 match the Standards in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Section 8D.04 that require automatic gates for vehicle traffic at highway-LRT grade crossings where LRT speeds exceed 40 mph. However, Section 8E.07 Paragraph 2 is being interpreted by some practitioners as requiring automatic pedestrian gates where LRT speeds exceed 40 mph. This interpretation is inconsistent with Section 8E.09 and was not addressed in FHWA's economic impacts assessment of the MUTCD 11th Edition. In addition, requiring automatic pedestrian gates at pathway-LRT and sidewalk-LRT grade crossings where LRT

36 speeds exceed 40 mph is not consistent with industry practice and would be impractical for
37 many sidewalk-LRT grade crossings. This proposal is intended to avoid this misinterpretation by
38 removing the reference to automatic gates in Section 8E.07. The determination regarding
39 automatic pedestrian gates at LRT grade crossings would remain the responsibility of the
40 Diagnostic Team, consistent with the rest of Part 8. The proposal also clarifies the Standard in
41 Section 8E.07 Paragraph 3 would apply to each sidewalk or pathway approach, not each
42 roadway approach.

43
44 **RECOMMENDED MUTCD CHANGES:**
45 The following present the proposed changes to the current MUTCD within the context of the
46 current MUTCD language. Proposed additions to the MUTCD are shown in blue underline and
47 proposed deletions from the MUTCD are shown in ~~red strikethrough~~. Changes previously
48 approved by NCUTCD Council (but not yet adopted by FHWA) are shown in green double
49 underline for additions and ~~green double strikethrough~~ for deletions. In some cases,
50 background comments may be provided with the MUTCD text. These comments are indicated
51 by [bracketed white text in shaded green].

52
53
54 **PART 8 RAILROAD AND LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT GRADE CROSSINGS**

55
56 **CHAPTER 8E. PATHWAY AND SIDEWALK GRADE CROSSINGS**

57
58 **Section 8E.07 Active Traffic Control Systems**

59 **Standard:**
60 ⁰¹ Except as provided in Paragraph **54** of this Section, at pathway-LRT and sidewalk-LRT grade
61 crossings where LRT operating speeds on a semi-exclusive alignment exceed 25 mph, active traffic
62 control systems shall be used.

63 ~~⁰² Except as provided in Paragraph 5 of this Section, at pathway-LRT and sidewalk-LRT grade
64 crossings where LRT operating speeds on a semi-exclusive alignment exceed 40 mph, active traffic
65 control systems, including automatic gates, shall be used.~~

66 ⁰³⁰² If used at a pathway or sidewalk grade crossing, an active traffic control system (see Section
67 8D.01) shall include flashing-light signals (see Figure 8E-7) on each pathway or sidewalk approach
68 to the crossing.

69 *Guidance:*
70 ⁰⁴⁰³ *If used at a pathway or sidewalk grade crossing, an active traffic control system (see Section 8D.01)*
71 *should include an audible device such as a bell that is operated in conjunction with the flashing-light*
72 *signals.*

73 **Option:**
74 ⁰⁵⁰⁴ Flashing-light signals, bells, and other audible warning devices may be omitted at pathway or
75 sidewalk grade crossings that are located within 25 feet of an active warning device at a grade crossing
76 that is equipped with those devices.

77 ⁰⁶⁰⁵ Additional pairs of flashing-light signals, bells, or other audible warning devices may be installed on
78 the active traffic control devices at a grade crossing for pathway or sidewalk users approaching the grade
79 crossing from the back side of those devices.

80 *Guidance:*
81 ⁰⁷⁰⁶ *Where railroad or LRT tracks in a semi-exclusive alignment are parallel and immediately adjacent*
82 *to a roadway and if adequate space exists, a pedestrian refuge area or island should be provided between*

83 *the tracks and the roadway to permit pedestrians to stand clear of the tracks while waiting to cross the*
84 *roadway and to stand clear of the roadway while waiting to cross the tracks. If a pedestrian refuge area*
85 *or island is provided at a signalized crossing of the roadway, additional pedestrian features (see Chapter*
86 *4I), such as signal heads, signing, and detectors, should be installed in the refuge area or on the island.*