

Federal Highway Administration

US Department of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Ave S.E.

Washington, DC 20590

RE: Serious concerns about the MUTCD in its current form

Dear Acting Administrator Pollack and Secretary Buttigieg:

I write, as a supporter of America Walks, and a person who cares very deeply about my community of Santa Cruz, California to raise serious concerns about the current draft MUTCD under revision by the agency. The MUTCD, an obscure technical document, is a major obstacle to the kind of humane, activity-supporting street level changes that are needed in my community and others across the United States.

Grassroots advocates like myself have valuable local knowledge that is too often brushed aside by traffic engineers based on the rule-bound dictates of the MUTCD. To make matters worse, much of the guidance is outdated, pseudoscientific and based on the premise that speeding cars through intersections is the most important goal.

I join America Walks and other groups to ask that U.S. DOT perform a comprehensive overhaul of the MUTCD, centering safety, equity and accessibility. We need a rule book that is designed to support healthier safer communities, one that:

- Makes painted bus lanes easier to build to prioritize more sustainable transportation,
- Ensures every urban and suburban signalized intersection has accessible pedestrian infrastructure, including curb ramps, audible and

tactile signals, pedestrian signal heads that display “Walk” and “Don’t Walk” messages, and painted crosswalks,

- Sets speed limits based on safety, not based on how fast cars are driving on the road,
- Gives local residents a voice in what kind of infrastructure is needed,
- Gives engineers flexibility to design urban streets that are safe enough for children to navigate.

**I join America Walks in asking that FHWA reframe and rewrite the MUTCD, creating a path for guidance that more closely aligns with the equity, safety, and sustainability goals of American cities, as well as those of the Biden Administration.**

Thank you,

Jonah Paten